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CONTENTS FOR DECEMBER, 1903

COVER DESIGNED BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY

"THE DYING YEAR"—PICTURE STUDY BY STEIN Insert Supplement

SOCIETY WOMEN AT THE NATION'S CAPITAL

Photographs by Cinedinst

PHOTOGRAPHIC ART PORTRAITS FROM PARIS STUDIOS

DRAWING TO ACCOMPANY "THE MAN WHO DIED" Gustavus C. Widney Frontispiece

THE MAN WHO DIED Mary Stuart Boyd 133
Illustrations by Gustavus C. Widney

A PRECIOUS ROGUE Everard Jack Appleton 144
Illustrations by Victor R. Lambdin

THE HYPOCRITE Algernon Boyesen 151
Illustrations by Walter Whitehead

THE PROMISED LAND Clinton Dangerfield 163
Illustrations by W. Charles Tanner

ON THE WAY OVER Elizabeth Phipps Train 173
Illustrations by Dan Sayre Groesbeck

BARTLETT'S EXPENSE ACCOUNT Paul R. Wright 182
Illustrations by Edgar Bert Smith

THE TWO FINGER MAN Lucia Chamberlain 190
Illustrations by C. Senf

QUARANTINED BY REQUEST Una Hudson 199

CORPORAL CASEY'S LITTLE JOKE David H. Talmadge 206
Illustrations by Howard Heath

AN ARRESTED BENEVOLENCE Jessie R. Odlin 212
Illustrations by Lewis C. Drew

NOT A STREAK OF YELLOW Harold Acton Vivian 216

REVEREND PERICLES PETERS, PIRATE Rex E. Beach 220
Illustrations by J. V. McFall

PERSONAL PAGES BY THE PUBLISHERS 229

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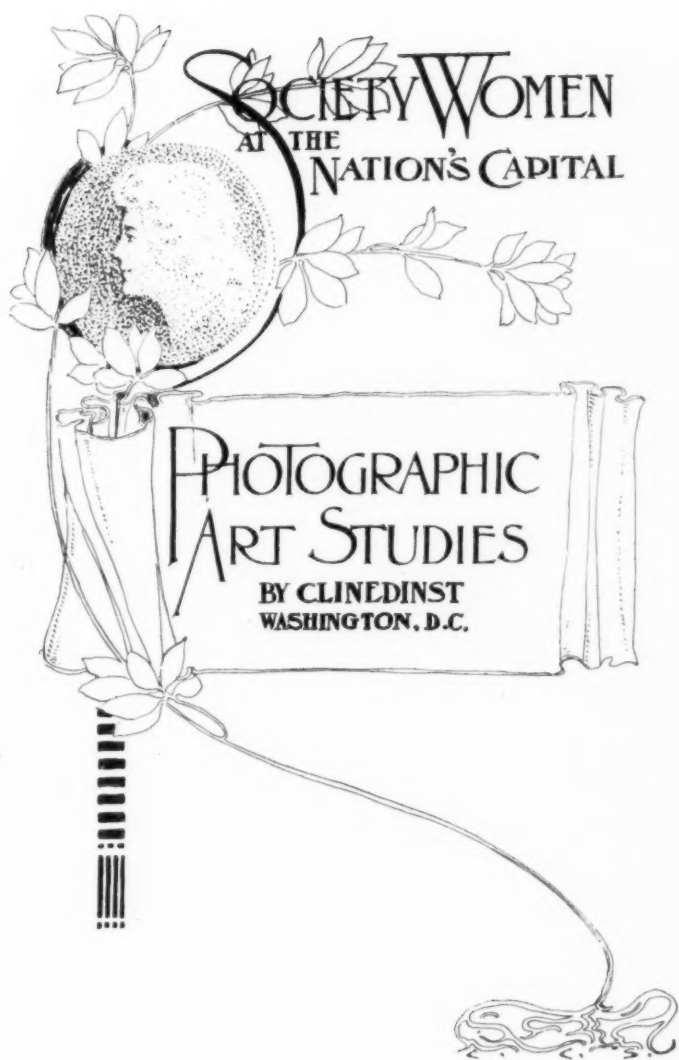
Supplement to
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December, 1903



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THE DYING YEAR

Picture Study by
STEIN
Milwaukee



MISS ALICE ROOSEVELT
MISS HILDEGARD M'KENNA
MRS. MARION GALLAUDET
COUNTESS MARGARITE CASSINI
MISS VIOLET LANGHAM
MISS DIANA MORGAN HILL
MISS THERESA LOUGHRAN
MISS MARGARET CHISHOLM



MISS ALICE ROOSEVELT

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MISS HILDEGARD M'KENNA

Youngest daughter of Justice McKenna of the United States Supreme Court

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MRS. MARION GALLAUDET

Daughter of Senator Cockrell of Missouri

Photograph by C. L. N. D. I. N. S. T.,
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Niece of the Russian Ambassador

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MISS VIOLET LANGHAM

Sister of Baroress von Sternberg, the German Ambassador's Wife

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A Washington Debutante

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MISS THERESA LOUGHRAN

A Washington "Gibson Girl"

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MISS MARGARET CHISHOLM

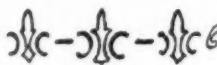
A Society Favorite

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MADAME SARAH BERNHARDT





Mlle. ROBINE





MLLE. LIANE DE POUGEY





MLLE. DEVERE





MLLE. BRESIL



MLLE. CASSIVE

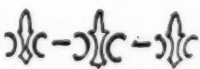




MLLE. DALENCAN



MLLE. COULISSE





DRAWN BY GUSTAVUS C. WIDNEY.

“ ‘Then why not be dead?’ Paington said quietly.”

“The Man Who Died;” see page 135

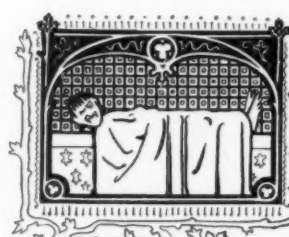
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THE RED BOOK

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No. 2



The Man Who Died

by Mary Stuart Boyd

FROM his keen, penetrating eyes to his acid-stained fingertips Brewitt was an artist. I say was, advisedly, for did I say is, the world would discredit my sanity.

At an early age Brewitt, then a shock-headed, opinionative hobble-de-hoy somehow handicapped by the birthright of an aggressive Yorkshire accent, had fought his way Londonward with the avowed intent of devoting his life to Art. His restive genius refusing to accomplish creditably the highly stippled specimen drawings required of each aspirant for admission to the Royal Academy Schools, Brewitt studied at the Slade, where his perturbed professors alternated between amazement at the flashes of inspiration displayed by the callow youth, and despair at the hopelessness of expecting him to conform to recognised rules. One term they held solemn conclave respecting the desirability of recommending him to abandon the study of Art. The next day they found themselves compelled

against all their preconceived convictions to award him the prize for a life-painting of exceptional merit.

One afternoon in the middle of a session, Brewitt, declaring that he had learned all they could teach him—a statement his instructors found it hard to confute—quitted the Slade, leaving unfinished a study in foreshortening that even in its embryonic state called forth the admiration of his fellow-students, and launched his oddly-rigged barque upon the cross-currents of professional life.

Fifteen years later Brewitt, sitting alone in his studio surveying the accumulated work of these, the best years of his life, was forced to confess that his craft had made but little progress toward the peaceful harborage of assured fame.

All through the bright May day he had wrought doggedly with etching needles and acids, conscious the while that his labor would but add another item to the unsought contents of the already full portfolios. When the light faded he set the kettle over the gas, and lounging back in the creaking basket-chair let his

thoughts run vagrant into the future.

Save for a low hard couch, one or two chairs, a throne, half a dozen easels, and the cupboard that concealed the evidences of Brewitt's spasmodic housekeeping, the gaunt studio contained little that could be termed furniture. All round the room pictures that had failed to find purchasers despondently turned their faces to the wall as if ashamed of their lack of success. Dusty portfolios bulged with daringly characteristic etchings; work that the world, deeming odd and weird, marveled at, but did not buy.

"Conqueror Death," a big allegorical oil-painting whose favorable reception at the Salon had been followed by rejection at the Academy, leaned shamefacedly against the end wall. The medal awarded at Munich for Brewitt's "Crucifixion of Love," lay before him, and looking at the tribute accorded him by aliens Brewitt found himself reviewing the careers of his fellow-students at the Slade. The work of none of them had been so individually distinctive or so hotly discussed as his own, yet he only had failed to make a comfortable living.

Hucknall, whose smooth "pretty-pretty" method had been Brewitt's detestation, was already an A. R. A. and making a little fortune from what Brewitt scornfully dubbed "Kiss-Mammy" pictures. Nunn's war subjects, composed mainly of blood and gunpowder, had a show to themselves in Pall Mall where the engravings were selling like hot cakes. Hericart had married and set up a tandem on his clever sketches of comic monkeys. Mac-kissock and Paington, Brewitt's close and abiding friends, had both made names for themselves. Mac-kissock was a sculptor of assured position, and Paington, who had

been a lazy student, wisely recognising that it is infinitely easier to pick holes in good work than to do it, had plunged boldly into the arena of art criticism, where by sheer effrontery he had succeeded in gaining a hearing.

Hucknall's treacly painting, Brewitt knew, could not survive him. The public favor accorded Nunn's theatrical battle pieces would but be fleeting. Yet, sitting in the dusk surrounded by his despised bantlings, Brewitt's heart waxed bitter within him at the knowledge that he, the only one of the group who had adhered to his ideals, was the only one who had difficulty in earning bread and butter.

It was May, one of the five fat months that in the artists' year succeed the seven lean ones, yet one figure and that a low one represented Brewitt's makings. Yet none could accuse Brewitt of lethargy. With the sole exception of the Academy, his paintings had found places in the different galleries. Then deep in the wilds of the Haymarket he had on view a collection of some fifty choice etchings. His work was well seen, and called forth comment of sorts from the critics; yet, so far, the season had not brought him a sale worth considering.

There is a limit to the endurance even of the strongest. Sitting with the dusk closing in around him, Brewitt's stout heart quailed before the hopelessness of the struggle against an adverse fate.

Roused from his painful reverie by a smart rat-tat he opened the studio door to Paington, the irresponsible.

"Hullo! Kettle boiling? That's all right. I'm gasping for a cup of tea," Paington cried, throwing a paper bag of buns down on the throne. Then, having deposited his

tall hat in the least dusty place he could find and sloughed off his frock-coat, he proceeded, with the air of one accustomed, to hunt in the cupboard for tea-things.

"Say, old man, the cups all need washing. Suppose you take yours out of a tumbler? The basin'll do me."

"I've just come from Pettigrew's private view," he added, as he spooned the tea out of Brewitt's apology for a caddy.

"Good show?"

"Rotten bad, but deuced salable stuff. Nice little cottages in nice little gardens, nice little children in clean pinafores going to school—you know the sort. Looked up at your show too, old man."

"I needn't ask if anybody was there, or if anything was doing."

"One old lady, two boys. No, I can't say business was exactly brisk," Paington acknowledged.

"Hucknall says he made three thousand last year. My work is miles ahead of his, and I didn't make enough to pay my frame-maker," cried Brewitt, his pent-up bitterness at length finding vent. "I don't know where to lay hand on a shilling just now; and all the time the thought galls me that what I've done would be worth a fortune if I were only dead."

A flash of inspiration smote Paington. "Then why not be dead?" he said quietly.

A note in his voice foreign to his usual badinage arrested Brewitt's attention. "What do you mean?" he asked sharply.

"Be dead—vanish—efface yourself and scoop in the proceeds. It's only fair that a man should reap what he's sown. Then vamoose to some sunnier clime, chuckling at the innocents who have at last awakened to the value of your work," counselled

Paington, his speech indistinct by reason of a Bath bun.

For a long moment Brewitt sat silent. "There's many a true word spoken in jest, Pangy," he said at length. "I don't see why I should have wrought for fifteen years only to benefit others. Things can't go on as they are. I'll take your advice—I'll die."

The scheme was one after the audacious Paington's heart. The tea cooled while he suggested half-a-dozen plans, each more outrageous and impossible than the other. The most feasible of his ideas was that a proxy for Brewitt in the shape of a weighted coffin should be cremated, but to that the difficulty of obtaining a certificate of death proved an obstacle. His notion that Brewitt should be drowned while bathing at Southend, leaving his garments on the beach as evidence of his demise, Brewitt combated on the ground that early May could hardly be accounted a bathing season, and that before he could secure other vesture he would probably have contracted a chill that would qualify him to be dead in very deed.

The entrance of their mutual friend, Mackissock the sculptor, whose studio was in the outer courtyard of the Velasquez Studios, brought them a reliable and astute counsellor.

Mackissock, his controversy against the impiety of such a proceeding confuted by Brewitt's argument that it was better to be dishonestly dead and live affluently, than to be righteously alive and die of starvation, entered whole-heartedly into the plot.

"In the first place there must be an actual funeral. So there must be a body, and where are we to get one? That's the question."

"Murder one of the fossil Academicians. He'll never be missed, or if he is I'll pledge my honor nobody will bother to make inquiries," suggested the flippant Paington, but the others were too much in earnest to heed his gibe.

"I have it!" exclaimed Mackissock after a pause during which he sucked energetically at his empty pipe. "Every week there are unclaimed bodies, mostly drowned ones, lying at the mortuaries. Suppose you disappear, after a day or two we'll raise a hue and cry and apply to the police. Then we'll identify a likely body and bury it as you, and the thing's done. No blame could fall upon us if it was found out that we had made a mistake; and certainly none could attach any to you if you were discovered to be living in retirement."

His scheme accepted, the wary Mackissock would have urged delay for its further consideration; but Brewitt's fifteen years of waiting had worn his patience threadbare.

"We'll hang it on the last post—it's due in ten minutes," he temporized at last. "If it brings any encouragement, I live. If it doesn't, I die, and the sooner the better."

Sitting in the half circle of radiance thrown by the center light they heard the steps of the postman echoing down the stone-flagged corridor like the approach of some inexorable fate. The sound of sundry documents falling into the letter-box, and the echo of the staccato *rat-tat* accelerated their heart-beats. For a moment the trio sat motionless; even the volatile Paington was subdued. Then Brewitt arose and striding to the door, collected the significant missives.

There were three—a circular from an artists' colorman, a polite reminder that his frame-maker's bill

for seventy odd pounds awaited payment, and a curt warning that unless the gas account was paid within three days the gas would be cut off.

"That settles it," said Brewitt, throwing the mail on the table with a mirthless laugh. "Let's eat, drink and be merry, boys. To-morrow I die!"

The following afternoon—Saturday—Brewitt, shaggy-maned and bushy-bearded, was seen to leave Velasquez Studios. That same evening Mr. James Wilson, a short-haired, clean-shaven man with spectacles, installed himself in cheap lodgings near Paddington Station.

Two days later Mackissock, after much futile hammering at Brewitt's closed door, went round the Studios inquiring if anybody knew what had become of his friend. And on Tuesday morning Paington appeared on the scene demanding an explanation why Brewitt had broken an engagement to dine with him on the previous night. On both of which points Brewitt's neighbors, owning as slender a knowledge of his movements as London neighbors usually do, failed to enlighten his friends, though Miss Nora O'Malley, the Irish girl artist whose studio was the only other occupied one in Brewitt's corridor, remembered having heard him go out on Saturday afternoon, and was positive that he had not since returned.

The news that the artist was missing spread like wild fire. The police were known to be on the alert, and the air grew thick with rumor. At the close of the week the art world was more shocked than surprised to learn through the medium of the public press that a drowned body lying at Southwark mortuary had been identified as that of the missing Brewitt. Well-authenticated though

wholly erroneous accounts of the dire straits to which a man of his undoubted genius had been reduced were in circulation. Paragraphs were rife. The intimation of his death appeared—as if to impress it on the public memory—on three consecutive days in the obituary list of the leading metropolitan journals.

rejoiced to see a goodly crowd of sympathizers.

"I say, though——" Paington, moved by one of his sudden thought contortions, whispered, as with bowed heads they marched slowly behind the coffin, "What about the nameless man we're burying to-day; what'll he say to this?"



"Mackissock, bearing the first precious impressions, had gone to interview the great Brookwells."

See page 142

A picturesquely pathetic account of the tragedy of the brilliant but ill-starred genius, written by Paington, appeared in the *Hyde Park Gazette* on Wednesday, and was copied in all the provincial papers. And at the funeral on Thursday afternoon in Kensal Green cemetery, Mackissock and Paington, who, as his executors, clad in the deepest of sable, acted as chief mourners,

"Say? He'll thank us for rescuing him from a pauper's grave if he says anything, which I doubt," replied the literal Mackissock.

Meantime Mr. James Wilson, pent in the seclusion of his Paddington lodging with only the secret visits of his fellow-conspirators to while away the leaden hours, was chafing against the restraint that girded him.

The day of the interment found

him unconquerably restive. With sardonic humor he mentally pictured the progress to the grave; and as evening drew on, an insensate craving to visit his last resting place dominated him. Yielding to it against his better judgment, he set forth, trusting to a hard felt hat and a weather-beaten Inverness cape of Paington's to complete the disguise of shaven face and spectacles.

The shadows were deep among the tombs when Brewitt reached Kensal Green cemetery, but in the west the sunset glow still lingered. In answer to his inquiries the keeper indicated a new mound in a remote corner. Finding his way thereto between the rows of stolid headstones, Brewitt stopped short in astonishment, for beside the stretch of bald, unsightly mould a woman was kneeling.

Even seen through the haze of gloaming something struck him as familiar in the poise of her head, the manner of her dress. As rising to go she turned in his direction, Brewitt, viewing the mourner from behind a tombstone, felt a thrill of pleasure at the discovery that it was Nora O'Malley. For the moment oblivious of the fact that he was officially dead, and that it was by his own grave she knelt, he started forward with the intention of addressing her. But at his unexpected appearance the girl, after one nervous glance in his direction, hurried off affrighted toward the gate; and Brewitt, arrested by a sudden consciousness of his position, shrank behind a monument, feeling as if in losing his identity, and with it the privilege of Nora's acquaintance, he had done himself an unwitting injury.

His place of sepulture, when he viewed it, presented all the dingy ghastliness of a new-made town grave. But as Brewitt looked, a spasm of softer feeling throbbed in

his heart, and brought a half-hysterical laugh to his lips, for he saw that on the raw unseemly earth, just over where the sleeper's heart might be, some one had laid a cluster of tear-bedewed purple violets.

Meantime matters had been progressing beyond expectation.

Paington and Mackissock, stealing after dark to visit the shabby Paddington lodging, reported the advance of the boom. Ripplier of the Universal Art Society had made an offer for the entire collection of Brewitt's prints on show in the Haymarket gallery. That offer, though a low one, the conspirators in conclave agreed to accept, knowing that with fifty prints on hand for which he had paid solid coin, Ripplier might be trusted to puff Brewitt for all he was worth. "Besides," added the wily Paington, "if we get the news of Ripplier having bought up the entire show well paraphrased, it'll be a ripping advertisement, for Ripplier is known to have an eagle eye for a likely corpse, such as yours, dear boy."

Paington's versatile pen had been busy. Under his well-known *nom-de-plume* of "Pochade" he had written a glowing eulogium on Brewitt—of whom he spoke as a genius sacrificed upon the altar of British conventionality in Art—in the paper with the largest circulation in the world. And cognizant that nothing helps a cause like antagonism, he had published as "Mahlstick" a foolishly vituperative critique of Brewitt's work in an unimportant evening paper. The British public, though it enjoys witnessing a living man badgered beyond endurance, revolts at the idea of abusing the dead, and "Pochade's" trenchant reply to "Mahlstick" called forth a storm of applause.

The Art Survey and *The Palette* both approached Brewitt's executors for permission to reproduce specimens of his work in their earliest possible issues. *Genre*, a select organ whose *metier* it is to pooh-pooh the living and extol the dead, had an exhaustive appreciation of the art of the man for whose work a month earlier it had found no adjective too slighting. And the managers of the most exclusive Bond Street picture gallery craved the privilege of holding a posthumous exhibition of his paintings.

The tide of success had set in at last. But Brewitt, shut up in his dingy lodging, with an uncomfortably chilly feeling about his shaven chin and naked upper lip, got but little pleasure from the anticipation of his changed finances, for all the manhood in him revolted against his enforced idleness. Brewitt had always been a man of action, but never had ideas so crowded upon him as during these days wherein he was condemned to sit idle, knowing that his life's work was finished.

A stroll taken after dusk in the unclassic purlieus of Edgware Road had introduced him to a grimy little shop wherein he had unearthed a veritable treasure-trove of old, hand-made paper, the ideal medium whereon to reproduce his etchings. It was with a hateful sense of restriction that he tore himself away without making a purchase that a few days earlier would have rejoiced his artistic soul.

With the thought of that priceless fund of faded paper—paper that the owner, regarding as stained and shop-worn, was prepared to sell as damaged stock—haunting and harassing his thoughts, Brewitt began to sketch out the idea for a series of etchings that kept obtruding itself on his thoughts.

Mackissock, coming in the next night with a fresh budget of newspaper cuttings, found his friend jotting down, on two-pence-worth of cheap note-paper that had been fetched by the lodging-house slavey, the rough outline of "Life the Leveler," that series of allegorical etchings that fixed Brewitt's statue in its niche in the temple of fame.

"Man," said Mackissock with genuine regret, "if you had only thought of that a month earlier it would have been five hundred pounds in your pocket—five hundred pounds, aye, every penny of it. Brookwells came up to my studio himself to-day to see if you had left nothing in his line. He was annoyed that Ripplier had got the advantage over him by buying the prints in the Rubens Gallery."

"Um," grunted Brewitt, savagely knocking the ashes out of his pipe, "I took all those prints, every man Jack of them, to Brookwells last October, and he refused even to look at them. What did you say?"

"Temporized, of course. Told him there was a lot of capital stuff hidden away in your portfolios that I hadn't had time to look over yet. This series would have been the very thing for him, and he'd have paid sweetly for it, too. But it's no use crying over unetched designs."

"If only I had my tools!" Brewitt exclaimed, consumed by the lust for occupation that all week had raged within him. "But I could do nothing here," he added, casting a disgusted look round the ugly, crowded little room. "In my studio I could have done the set in ten days. Then there's some lovely old paper that I could lay hands on dirt cheap—"

Mackissock sprang to his feet.

"Look here, laddie, you can hide in your own studio every bit as well

as here. I'll send you a telegram that will give you an excuse for leaving here at once. Then I'll run down to the studios and be ready to open the door to you."

Before the lapse of an hour Brewitt, in his character of Mr. James Wilson, was showing his landlady a telegram calling him to the sick-bed of a mother resident in Manchester. It relieved him considerably to note that when the good lady professed to read the message she held it upside down; otherwise the fact that a telegram purporting to come from Manchester should have been handed in half-an-hour earlier at a Paddington post-office might have impressed her with distrust of its genuineness. Paying her what he owed, Brewitt entrusted his portmanteau to her care, and retained the rooms as a convenient refuge should occasion arise.

Entering through the iron gates of Velasquez Studios he almost forgot the fact of his non-existence in the sense of home that pervaded the bleak corridor. Passing Nora O'Malley's door he wondered if she were still trying to supplement the scant earnings of her brush by drawing impossible fashion-plates for the ladies' magazines.

"Whist, man!" Mackissock's fierce whisper greeted him. "What d'ye mean tramping in here as if the place belonged to you, and you happit up in Kensal Green?"

After the flaccid enervating days endured in the dreary lodging, the paint-tinctured atmosphere of the studios seemed charged with vitality. Throwing off his coat, Brewitt quickly donned his ragged acid-stained blouse and set to work.

There is no incentive to action equal to enforced idleness. Without loss of time Brewitt separated his etching materials from the medley

that littered the top of his desk, and began the first plate. Mackissock was busy rumaging among the chaos of old pictures, selecting those suitable for the coming exhibition, and the two preserved rigid silence; for the Velasquez Studios, as befits their comparatively low rents, are but shoddily built, and their slim walls have a way of transmitting sound.

At ten o'clock Mackissock, stretching his long back which was stiff from stooping over dusty canvases, in a low voice suggested ceasing labor for the night.

"Stop? Not I. I'm in a fever of work. I'm good to go on till morning," replied Brewitt, without lifting his eyes from the point of his needle.

"Then I'd better warn that girl next door that I'll be moving about most of the night. I can sleep in your room," Mackissock whispered, as he put the whiskey on the table and opened a paper of sandwiches. These preparations for a scramble supper complete, he tapped at Miss O'Malley's door.

She opened to him pale and trembling, her blue-gray Irish eyes eloquent of fear.

"I came to warn you not to be alarmed if you heard any noise in the studio at nights. We're going to have a one-man show of poor Brewitt's pictures soon, and Paington and I are looking over his stuff. So we'll need to be working night and day—probably sleeping here."

"I'm glad you told me, Mr. Mackissock, for to tell the truth I was feeling a little bit nervous." Miss O'Malley tried to speak lightly. "Just after dusk I thought I heard Mr. Brewitt walk along the passage and go into the studio. Of course it must have been imagination, but I knew his step so well that just for a moment I thought it was really he. Though of course I know that is im-



"I say yes, now. Yes, yes, yes." See page 143

possible——" The tears that had arisen at the mention of her friend trembled on her eyelashes as she abruptly turned away.

"You'll need to be careful, Brewitt, old chap," admonished Mac-kissock. "That lassie next door knew your footstep to-night as you came in, and thought you were your own ghost! So we'll need to be wary. It wouldn't do to have the

Psychical Society begin to investigate the case, you know."

Knew his footsteps!

Lying down on the couch at dawn to snatch a few hours' rest, Brewitt, too excited by his debauch of work to sleep, found his "waukriffe" thoughts recur again and again to the lonely Irish girl to whom the echo of his footsteps had come to be a thing apart, in whose starveling life

their cessation had caused a blank.

The eternal feminine had held no part in Brewitt's existence. Woman's influence on an artist's career he had always asserted to be disastrous. Lying there with the gray dawn stealing through the blinds he cited instances to himself. There was Rowan who ruined his chances by marrying a model; and Ardine who, having committed the folly of wedding too early, was expiating his indiscretion by giving drawing lessons in suburban schools. Then there was the ghastly story of Traynon who was found in his studio with his throat cut.

No. Brewitt was distinctly not a woman's man; he had never felt tempted to share his struggles with anyone. It struck him as odd that, now that his death rendered it impossible for him to think tenderly of the sex, he should for the first time feel attracted toward it. He wondered whether, had he owned a loyal woman comforter, his life would have proved as barren of joy as it had. Nora O'Malley, he remembered, had knelt beside his grave. Would a good wife's prayers have made his trials more easy of endurance? Possibly they might, but, as he regretfully remembered, it was too late now.

"Poor Nora. Poor little lonely girl," he said, and as he fell upon slumber Brewitt's last sentient desire was for an opportunity of thanking her for putting the violets on his grave.

The craved opportunity came all unexpectedly. The close of a fortnight of incessant secret toil saw "Life the Leveler" completed. A rumor of the existence of a set of etchings of unparalleled originality having through the wiles of Paington reached the ears of the great Brookwells, that potentate had claimed the

first offer of their reproduction, and Mackissock bearing the first precious impressions had gone to interview him.

Anxiously awaiting the result, Brewitt, exhausted with labor, had fallen into a fitful doze in whose troubled dreams the great picture dealer alternately treated his emissary with extravagant effusion and with crushing contempt.

Half roused by a knock at the door, and wholly forgetful of the restrictions of his position, in his anxiety to hear Mackissock's report Brewitt sprang up and opened the door to—Nora O'Malley!

But it was a sadly changed Nora who stood before him clutching the lintel for support under the shock of being confronted by one bearing a startling resemblance to and wearing the dilapidated blouse of her dead hero. Brewitt's screening spectacles had been forgotten, and without their aid the removal of his beard and moustache was not sufficient disguise to shield him from the recognition of her who held so vivid a memory of his features.

On his part, Brewitt's concern for her eclipsed all else; he found it hard to credit that the lapse of so few weeks should have wrought so vast a difference in her aspect. Clad in the cheap black frock that he guessed was worn for his sake, Nora's figure looked slender to attenuation. The wild-rose bloom had paled on her cheeks; purple shadows encompassed the blue-gray Irish eyes.

For a moment the two stood transfixed, staring speechlessly at each other. Then, as the sound of a heavy tread sounded from the outer hall, Brewitt, aroused to the danger of detection, drew the girl into the studio, and, shutting the door against the world, made full confession of the situation.

In her joyous relief at finding him alive, all else at first counted of but little import, but as the moments sped the difficulties of the position began to loom darkly before her.

"But what is to be the end?" Nora asked at last, breaking the silence that had fallen upon them. "If you have voluntarily ceased to exist, what will you do with the rest of your life?"

"I don't know," Brewitt answered slowly. "My last state may be worse than my first. Unless, Nora"—he spoke, impelled by a sudden overwhelming impulse—"you are willing to take a gift of a man without even a name or a home to offer you, and we go out into the world and seek our fortunes together? Wait, don't say no yet," he interposed hastily, as she was about to speak. "I hear Mackissock coming and he may have good news."

"I won't wait," Nora said, rising, a trembling but ecstatic figure before him. "I say yes now. Yes, yes, *yes*. Even though you may never earn another penny, I ask no better fate than to share your exile!"

"Brewitt would have been lonely

without her," even the cynical Paington acknowledged several months later when a letter written in a flow of spirits such as for many years had been foreign to their comrades, reached them from sunny Spain. "He is a lucky beggar, isn't he? I say! Did you ever see things sell as his did? D'ye remember how the dealers wrangled over the stuff in his show, and yet we'd put on pretty stiff prices. Well, with the money from that exhibition, and £1200 from 'Conqueror Death' that's hanging in the Tate Gallery—how Brewitt must chuckle over that—and the £500 Brookwells paid for the etchings, and a little more from the scraps, there's enough to give Brewitt a nobby little annuity. He can rest from his labors now and be happy."

"Brewitt won't, though. He's not the sort to idle. Take my word for it," pronounced Mackissock, "Brewitt will work out an even bigger reputation for himself under his assumed name than he did under the one he has abandoned."

And indeed there seems every likelihood that Mackissock's prophecy may be fulfilled.



A Precious Rogue

By Everard Jack Appleton

The little clock on the mantel was languorously striking twelve as Sinclair entered his apartment and closed the door gently behind him. Without stopping to turn on the light he crossed the room to the long French windows opening upon the balcony, which ended ignominiously in a plebeian fire-escape. As he touched the latch, a brilliant bit of heat lightning embroidered the top of a cloud in the distant sky, and though it blinded him momentarily, it gave him the impression of a figure standing motionless on the other side of the glass. Before he realized that no human being had a right there at this time of night, he had sprung the latch, opened wide the window—and was looking into the muzzle of a short-barreled revolver.

"Hands up!" whispered a voice somewhere behind the weapon. Sinclair promptly obeyed the injunction, and the intruder, enveloped in a long coat and wearing a cap with a large visor, and a pair of automobile goggles, followed him into the room and closed the window.

"Sit down," he continued, indicating a chair at the further side of a book-littered table. In the uncertain light of the room, Sinclair stumbled over a tabourette, and his visitor remarked curtly, "Quietly, there!" Sinclair turned his head angrily to make reply, but looked again into the revolver's muzzle, uncomfortably close to him now. He sat down.

Without lowering the weapon, the other touched a button in the wall and the diffused glow of hidden electric lights filled the room. Sinclair caught at his fast-disappearing self-poise.

"Allow me to thank you for performing that service," he said, "I should have done it before—especially had I known you were on the balcony.

"Don't mention it," replied his visitor, softly, "especially in any louder tone of voice. This is purely a business call, and ceremony between us may be dispensed with at the outset. Time, even so early in the morning, is valuable, Mr. Sinclair."

Sinclair chuckled appreciatively. "As you will," he replied. "You have the advantage of me on two counts—you know my name and you have the only weapon in the room. But may I ask to whom I am indebted for this visit, and what I can do for you? My pocket-book——"

"You may put your hands on the table, not under it," interrupted the visitor. "As to who I am, it really does not have any bearing on the matter in hand. In place of your pocket book I will take the keys to the drawer of your safe."

Sinclair's jaws shut with an audible snap. "Come," he said, "I recognize that you have the upper hand and I am willing to give you anything in reason; but I really must



"It was kind of you to readjust her cloak."

See page 146

draw the line at your investigating my private papers. This is a farce, I take it from the costume you are wearing, and as my papers are serious to me at least, they do not need to be brought into the performance, for——"

He stopped abruptly. His visitor was leaning across the table listening intently, and he caught himself, even in his rising indignation, doing the same. Quick steps could be heard passing down the outer hall, and a cheery "Good-night, Sinclair!" came to their ears.

"Tell him good-night," whispered the burglar.

"Good-night, Broome!" called Sinclair. His visitor waited until the sound of the footsteps had ceased. Then he said:

"Mr. Sinclair, I want that key. Am I to get it quietly, or——" He glanced meaningly at his right hand, and raised his shoulders interrogatively. Sinclair folded his hands before him on the table.

"Won't you sit down?" he asked irrelevantly. "For me to be seated while you stand is embarrassing, to say the least."

The other pulled a small chair to the table with one foot, and sat down.

"Now," he continued, "I am ready for you to comply with my request." Sinclair breathed an exaggerated sigh of relief. "Notwithstanding your previous remark on the business tone of this unsolicited call," he said, "I really must thank you again. Nothing makes me so uncomfortable as to see a guest of mine tired, and I imagine that you are tired, for you must have been waiting for me a long time. But before we go any further, will you not place me still further in your debt by telling me why you want my keys? My safe contains

nothing, as I have said before, but papers that are valuable to me——"

"And the necklace," retorted the burglar, quietly. Sinclair's eyes narrowed to disagreeable slits in his handsome face.

"I beg your pardon," he said.

"The necklace which you so cleverly stole from Mrs. Van Bergen at the Antrim ball, night before last," continued the burglar. "It was kind of you to readjust her coat as it caught on the newel-post, and it was clever if not kind in you to loosen the clasp of the necklace she was wearing, and drop it into your overcoat pocket."

Sinclair's face colored slowly.

"Unfortunately for you," his visitor went on, gently, "some one saw you—some one who happened to be directly above you leaning over the banister. I doubt if your little sleight-of-hand performance could have been detected from any other vantage point.

"That some one is here now, and unless you give up the jewel without a scene, I will step to the window, call the police, and——"

"Be arrested for breaking into my apartments and making a ridiculous demand," added Sinclair. "Now, my dear fellow, has this not gone far enough? I am sure you are too good a performer to anti-climax any of your acts as you are in danger of doing. If you are ready, I will be glad to let you out the door, and you may return to your virtuous couch, from which this melodramatic idea has doubtless brought you. I—— What is that on the balcony?"

It was a puerile trick, hardly worth the trying, yet it worked. The burglar, taken off his guard, turned his head slightly, and the next moment his wrists were caught in the vise-like grip that had made Sinclair famous in his college days.

The captive sprang to his feet, struggling desperately, but his captor forced him to the chair again, keeping the revolver pointed carefully away.

"When you are through this nonsense," he said quietly, "I will be pleased to release you, as I offered to do a moment ago."

The answer was enough to surprise even as placid a man as Sinclair. The burglar's head drooped slowly forward until the visor of the big cap touched the table and fell off, revealing masses of red-gold hair piled high on a dainty, womanly head.

Sinclair stared in silent amazement, and the burglar burst into tears, sweeping the unbecoming mask from her face as she sought for a handkerchief. Her captor released her wrists quickly, and stepped back. "I beg your pardon," he said, stiffly. "I suppose I have hurt you; but under the circumstances, you will perhaps forgive me."

She did not raise her head, but the sobs ceased suddenly. Sinclair caught the revolver as it slipped from her hand and laid it on the table. Then he sprang to the sideboard, filled a glass with water, and began sprinkling it on her pale cheek. At the second application she looked up.

"You are very kind," she murmured, and Sinclair noticed with peculiar satisfaction that the girl was pretty, "but that will be quite enough. I did not mean to be so foolish; it was the pain."

Sinclair looked down at her quizzically. "That is in your favor, as it is to my discredit," he answered, "proving, as it does, that you are new to this rather precarious business, and unaccustomed to tight places."

Even as he spoke, her hand closed over the revolver again. "And

yet," she returned, lifting it, "I am not wholly helpless in extricating myself from them. Will you kindly get me that necklace now?"

Her host sat down again, with more suddenness than grace.

"Well, I'll be —; I like that!" he exclaimed, "you may be an amateur, but you certainly need no cold storage for your nerves. After attempting to rob me, fainting, being carefully brought around, and apologized to, you proceed to hold me up again. Don't you think you are slightly over-doing this matter?"

"I will give you one minute more in which to produce those keys, open your safe, and get that necklace," she said, calmly ignoring his remarks. "This has gone about far enough, as you say," she added smiling.

Sinclair shrugged his shoulders, and going to the little safe in the wall he moved the combination, threw open the door, unlocked the top drawer and made the girl a deep obeisance. "As you will," he remarked, curtly.

The girl lifted the heavy necklace out of its bed of cotton. "Your taste is admirable," she said softly, "and I see only one stone is gone. Do you usually dispose of them so early—and one at a time?"

He nodded. "It is safer," thoughtfully, "and the pawnshops are open at five o'clock."

"It must be very interesting," she went on, "you pry them out, I suppose, and remount them singly in these stud settings you have so handy—and dispose of them where you can?"

"Your acumen is truly marvelous," he answered dryly, "it occurs to me that you missed your calling—you should be a detective instead of a —"

"A thief set to catch a thief?"

Perhaps some day I may. Now I will merely thank you for you many kindnesses—and say good-night."

Sinclair stepped to the sideboard again. "Surely," he remonstrated, "you will not go until you have had some little refreshment. After your strenuous evening, you must feel the need of it."

"But this was a business call, you know."

"And a cocktail is its natural accompaniment."

"Cocktails at this hour? Isn't it rather untimely for that sort of thing?"

"The great American cocktail, my dear Miss James—or Turpin—or whatever you wish me to call you—is never untimely. It is impossible for it to be *de trop*—this acme of national characteristics in liquid form!"

The girl laughed softly. "After such a recommendation," she said, "I cannot refuse—provided you mix it where I can see that you do not put in any—what is it called?—knock-about drops."

Sinclair chuckled. "That is a weapon that even I decline to use," he declared. Miss Turpin watched him smilingly as he prepared the drink, and took her glass with a small, firm hand.

"Having mixed this," continued her host, "I ask for the privilege of suggesting a toast."

"Assuredly."

"To the health of the next who gets the necklace."

"Certainly; its rightful owner!"

Sinclair's face, for the first time that night, turned a shade whiter.

"Surely," he said, lowering his glass, "you are not the one from whom—from whom the trinket was taken?"

"No; only a close friend. But I saw you take it."

"And you are Miss——?"

"Miss Turpin, for to-night."

"And after to-night?"

"As they say in the melodramas, 'We are strangers!'"

"Then you do not intend to—to——"

"Rob you of your good name—undeserved though it is—by exposing you? I do not. You may learn some day that I am going to do something far nobler than that." Her voice softened as she spoke, and Sinclair's heart warmed unaccountably. She was very pretty, he decided—quite the prettiest girl he had seen for a long while. "I am going to start some one on the straight road of life again, and—— But this will not interest you."

"To help a fellow being who is down? Then I beg to amend my toast—to Miss Dick Turpin, the noblest burglar of them all!"

She touched her glass to his own, and he drank appreciatively, as she sipped the liquid he had prepared. A strange and not wholly comfortable feeling swept over him as he watched her intently—a feeling that ten years before he would have called his conscience stirring him. She set the glass down again and moved toward the window.

"Please don't!" he said, quickly stepping to her side, "you are not going to attempt that fire escape again, surely?"

"I came up it—and I am measurably sure-footed."

"But you may be seen."

"And arrested? That would be bad for both of us. But the stairway is——"

"Perfectly safe, especially in your disguise which deceived me for the time being. May I assist you into it again?"

She looked at him negatively. "My wrists were not permanently injured the last time you helped me," she remarked, thoughtfully,

"but they might be if that performance were repeated."

Sinclair's eyes fell. "I was a brute," he acknowledged, "but I did not know. I had hoped you would forgive me that."

Miss Turpin slipped the necklace into an inner pocket and picked up the mask and cap.

head been an inch further away, perhaps he would not have lost his own; but the next moment he had stooped and taken her in his arms, his lips upon hers.

A moment later he was standing in the doorway, alone; his cheek burning with the impact of her little palm, the echo of her light footsteps



"'As you will,' he remarked curtly." See page 147

"I do," she said. "There is honor among a certain class, as we were taught when children—and we belong to that class, I suppose. You may put my mask on."

His pulses leaped uncomfortably at the look in her dark eyes. She put her hand in his for a moment. Had her fingers been cool, perhaps he would have remained so; had her

dying away in the distance As in a dream he turned back, closed the door softly again, and moved toward the table. The faint but intoxicating odor of her presence was still there, and a hundred different feelings tugged at his heart as she sank into the chair which she had occupied.

"What a thoroughbred she is—and

what a thoroughbred ass am I!" he mused. "I have seen her before—but where?" His glance fell upon a small white object beside the chair, and he caught it up eagerly—a soft little handkerchief, from which rose the faint perfume that was now wine to his soul. He turned it eagerly about. There was no monogram on it, not even an initial.

Sinclair glanced at himself in the mirror, and laughed.

"Touched in the head, poor idiot!" he remarked to the reflection there. "Did she put 'knockabout' drops in *your* glass? Robbed of a necklace that would have kept you comfortable for a year, tricked and made a fool of by a girl you never saw before, that you can be sure of—you are a fit candidate for some charitable institution! And all you have to balance the account is a kiss—taken by force."

He picked up the half-empty glass she had left.

"And yet," he added, "it was worth it."

Then he drained the contents of the glass.

"It doesn't astonish me so very much," said Roberts, lighting a fresh cigarette, and glancing out of the club window. "I always thought Marnell an honest chap and sure to pay his debts if given time."

"But the idea of his sending the money to me so early in the morning," protested Briggs. "Why, it was no later than seven o'clock, my man declares."

"And I got mine by half-past," volunteered Van Pelt. "I don't understand it. Marnell must have turned over a new leaf indeed to be up at that time of day."

Rogers tossed an afternoon paper

at Roberts. "There is something about him in this sheet, I believe," he remarked. "Perhaps you'd like to see it."

Roberts picked up the paper and glanced at the headlines. Then he sat up very straight.

"The crazy fool!" he exclaimed. "Listen to this: 'Sensation in Exclusive Society Circles! James Marnell, well-known clubman, elopes with his mother's maid!' Hum-m-m, let's see. 'Man-about-town—very popular—best society, old family—understood that debts were very large—all cancelled early this morning.' That's the explanation! 'Girl a stunning beauty.' They always are, of course. 'Raised on a ranch, reverses of fortune drove her to self-support as a maid. Understood in some quarters that she furnished the money—not known where she got it. Gone west, leaving note to the effect that they were married early in the morning. Great excitement at Marnell home; mother and sisters prostrated; father refuses interview—er—story of Marnell's early life, and so on! Well, that *is* a lovely mess, by the gods!'"

Sinclair caught his breath and pushed his chair back into the shadow of a marble pillar.

Roberts whistled. "I wonder where she got that money?" he asked.

Sinclair yawned behind a steady hand.

"I haven't the least idea," he said.

"Well," remarked Briggs, "she must be a clever girl, to accomplish all that so quietly."

Sinclair flicked the ashes from his cigarette. Then he laughed softly.

"She was," he said, "devilish clever!"



We formed a half circle in the club's spacious bow-window late one winter afternoon, dividing our attention between the throng of pedestrians jostling along the icy pavement—the masculine element pushing ahead, coat collars up about red ears, heads bent to the stinging wind; the feminine contingent mincing along with flapping boas and fluttering draperies—and the continuous procession of weather-beaten cabs and hansoms interspersed with polished broughams, the smoking horses laboring slowly through the sea of slushy snow which distinguishes Fifth Avenue in winter. Secure in the comfortable club-room with its warm expanse of red walls, we felt, with each flurry of snow against the window pane, an increasing sense of animal beatitude.

I had been shooting in the South for a month and consequently followed with more than usual interest the flow of cynical comment that circled about the unconscious heads of the passersby. I felt the need of getting in touch once more with the little doings of the great world.

Beverly, driven behind the pink breadth of an evening paper, evidently in search of more profitable mental pabulum than the conversation afforded, dropped the sheet into his lap with an exclamation that drew the nomadic attention of the idle group in the window.

"Bless my soul, if I can make out



how Benny Varrish always gets his name in the society columns as 'among those present.' It's a year now since I have seen him at a debutante's tea, much less a dinner, yet his name is as sure to appear in the published list of invited guests to every smart affair as—er—mine is."

As it was known that Beverley's bizarre and lavish bachelor entertainments called forth a veritable shower of return invitations from a society which suffered chronically with ennui, his listeners felt that he could have employed no more convincing analogy. The fact that his father had made his money in a rather shady stock-market transaction had long since been tacitly relegated to that limbo which a polite world reserves for scandals which it finds to its advantage to forget.

"I happen to know that he wasn't at the Burton's dinner-dance last

night," continued Beverly; "actually asked me to get him an invitation at the last moment. It's needless to remark that I didn't. Yet here's his name sandwiched in between mine and George Wardle's. I give it up!" He held out the paper in exposition, with a white, fat hand, and then dropped it beside his chair, with a gesture of despair at the enigma it presented for his consideration.

In the face of such a statement, Wardle felt called upon to protest:

"I have always held that this country is wanting in a sense of caste," said he. "For my part I have no sympathy for a fellow who aspires out of his class. Varrish never had any position worth mentioning, anyway."

Wardle was a man of obscure lineage who had succeeded through sheer perseverance in clambering up to a respectable height on the social ladder, where he now maintained his perch with no little difficulty. It was but natural that from this enviable eminence he should look down with scorn upon those whose efforts had not met with a like success.

"My dear boy, you're away off there," remarked Beverly, in the decisive tone of an acknowledged authority, "there isn't a better or an older name in New York than Varrish. Old Benedict Varrish was the most popular man about town of his day; belonged to all the swagger clubs, went everywhere, and all that sort of thing. Mrs. Varrish was famous for her beauty, her gowns and her pompous dinners. In those days all the smartest folks in town flocked to the old Varrish mansion in Gramercy Park. In the midst of it the old man came a cropper in Wall Street. He died shortly afterwards without leaving a penny. Since then the family has naturally

dropped out of society. For a while people who retained a lingering recollection of the good dinners they had eaten in Gramercy Park asked young Varrish around, but gradually, by a process which may be termed, with propriety, the survival of the fittest, he has been eliminated from the list of eligible bachelors society asks to its table. Which teaches us that if one wishes to be entertained one must be entertaining."

A general titter applauded the wit and wisdom of Beverly's aphorism.

"A chap who hasn't one copper in his breeches to rub against another can't expect to be asked about much," observed Archie Newell. As a man who had married a homely woman with a handsome bank account, he justly held poverty in aristocratic aversion.

Tompkins, one of those jovial, rubicund individuals who possessed the rare gift of telling malicious stories about his dearest friends with an air of genial good humor calculated completely to disarm any suspicion of malice, had been lounging on the outskirts of the group lazily following the trend of the conversation without hitherto contributing to it. He now drew up his chair, the twinkle in his small eyes the obvious prelude to a good story.

"I fancy I can let light into that mystery," said he. "I'll wager you fellows won't believe me. Take my oath it happened just as I am going to tell it. Have it straight from Chambers, the *Globe's* society editor."

Curiosity was aroused; a chorus assured him of confidence in his veracity, and the circle of chairs closed about him.

"Picture Chambers sitting in the editorial sanctum this morning, striving to contrive a romantic story out of a commonplace divorce case or writing up a florid account of Mrs.

Nobody's reception, the recollection of a full-page advertisement of her husband's drygoods in the morning's *Globe* lending superlatives to his pen, interrupted by a gentlemanly stranger following close upon the heels of the office-boy bearing his card.

"'Pardon me,' says the visitor, 'I should like to call your attention to the omission of my name in your society news as among those present at the dance last night. I shall be obliged if you will rectify the error in your evening edition.'

"Chambers, after consulting the card at his elbow, spins around in his chair and subjects his visitor to a piercing scrutiny from under bushy brows. 'Varrish—Varrish—Benedict Varrish,' he says, repeating the name as if he were trying to familiarize himself with a word from a barbaric tongue. 'You weren't there, were you?'

"One would suppose that a man of any decency detected in so ridiculous a deception would beat a hasty retreat behind muttered apologies, but not so our friend Varrish. He holds his ground and says with a dogged air, 'I should be obliged if you would insert it.' Chambers confessed to me that he was so astonished at a man he knew to be a gentleman born persevering in so vulgar a request, that he acquiesced without knowing what he was saying. At that Varrish solemnly bows himself out."

His story concluded, Tompkins leaned back in his chair and laughed as uproariously as his very tight waistcoat would permit.

"Fancy a man being such a hypocrite!" exclaimed Wardle in a tone which suggested that such deep-dyed dissimulation horrified his innocent young soul. "I suppose he gets his reward for making such an arrant ass of himself, posing before the

dazzled vulgarians in the limelight of social supremacy. The metaphor puts me in mind of the anecdote of the cockney actor who delighted to play in English high comedy, because of the aristocratic thrills he enjoyed impersonating dukes and earls."

There is no one so loudly intolerant of hypocrisy as the hypocrite. Wardle journeyed all the way to Pittsburg regularly twice a year for the sake of enjoying similar thrills.

"In the light of Chambers' story



"I made my debut forty years ago."

See page 158

it's rather amusing to recall the Knickerbocker scorn with which Varrish affected to regard the present degenerate state of society when he really did go about a bit," Tompkins observed, and added in the kindly tone with which he always ended a particularly unkind story, "'Pon my word, I'm really quite cut up about it. I always rather liked Varrish. Pity he should turn out such a cad!"

I left the room, Tompkins' hearty laugh ringing rather discordantly in my ears. I was aware that the protagonist of such a tale deserved nothing less than the ridicule he got, yet I could not bring myself to admit that Benedict Varrish could be the object of either laughter or pity. I knew well that there is no mistake so irreparable as once making one's self ridiculous, no crime for which a man pays more dearly, and I found myself wishing that Tompkins had kept his precious anecdote to himself. I had always been glad to count Varrish amongst my friends. A grave courtesy of manner, coupled with a rather courtly presence, distinguished him from the average man of one's acquaintance, and stamped him the gentleman-born. In short, he looked his part; he satisfied one's sense of type, and in a world of bewildering contradictions and incongruities I had felt that I owed him a debt of gratitude. In my mind he had attained to the dignity of an individual typifying a class; to me he epitomized the scorn of the aristocrat for the plutocrat, of the Knickerbocker for the man who preferred not to trace his lineage beyond his bank account. I had fancied him receiving a pleasant flow of invitations as his due, and accepting them as his duty, while privately despising the frivolous amusements of a vulgarized society. It was difficult to reconcile this conception of

his private pose with his present ridiculous public posture. Coriolanus catering to the plebs would not have been more shocking to one's sense of the fitness of things.

It happened that as I was leaving the club I came face to face with Varrish coming up the steps. I stopped to shake hands with him, a half-formed resolve in my mind to drop him a tactful hint of the decision he was, evidently unconsciously, drawing down upon his head. We had hardly interchanged the commonplaces of greeting and I was beginning a search for a suitable phrase with which to touch upon a rather awkward subject, when Varrish blurted out, "You're just the man I'm looking for. You know the Adairs rather well, don't you? Hate to trouble you, but couldn't you manage to get me an invitation to their dance next week?"

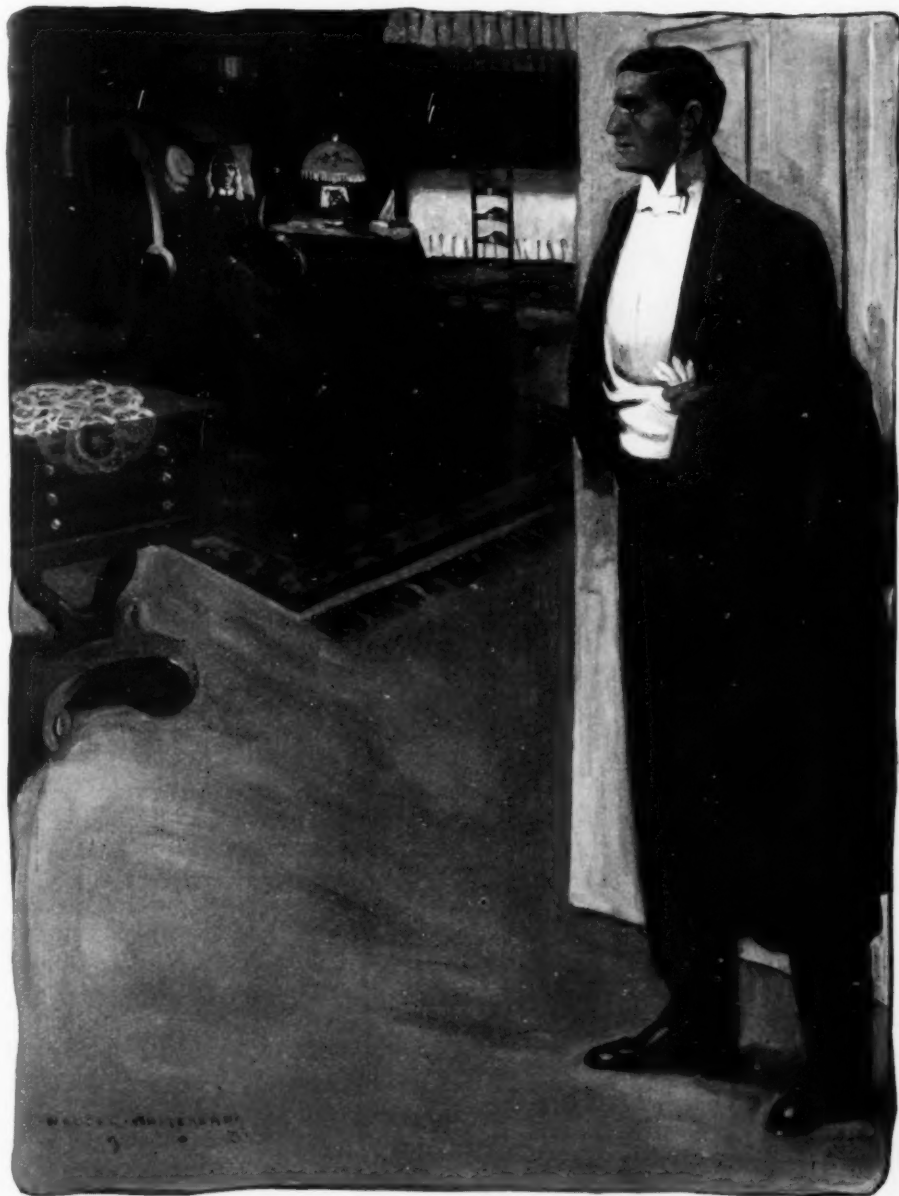
I was conscious of a sudden revolution of feeling towards him. Clearly, he was not the man I had pictured him. It was hardly flattering to my pride in my own perspicacity to find my judgment of him so completely at fault.

My answer was coldly formal. "My acquaintance with Mrs. Adair does not warrant such a liberty."

In the uncertain light of the street lamps I fancied that his face flushed. There was an embarrassed silence, during which Varrish traced invisible characters on the pavement with his stick. I was unprepared for his insistence.

"You couldn't manage it, then?" he asked as if reluctant to accept a definite negative. In his voice there was a note of earnestness, unpleasantly suggestive of appeal, that seemed to me altogether uncalled for by the situation. I reiterated my refusal more decisively.

"I am sorry to have troubled you,"



"The door opened to admit a young man in evening clothes." See page 159

he said with a hint of his old dignity, and then after a moment's hesitation, "I wonder whether Beverly could fix it up for me. Have you seen him about?"

It would have been inhuman to let

him enter that sneering circle, still shaking with recollections of Tompkins' story, with such a request on his lips. A prevision of a rebuff accompanied by the blunt and brutal chaff which prevails amongst men,

impelled me to catch him by the sleeve as he started up the steps.

"Don't do it, Varrish," I cried impulsively; "as it is I left Beverly jeering at your social pretensions. Can't you see that this sort of thing is making you the butt of the whole town's ridicule?"

He drew back as if I had struck him. The last word came out on his cheek like the red mark of a blow.

"Good God!" he groaned, "Good God, man, don't tell me that! You men who know me can't misunderstand me like that!"

The sudden violence of his emotion shocked and surprised me. In open-mouthed wonder I looked into his white, tragic face, at a loss to account for the depth of misery and humiliation my words had called there. No man, I thought, could be so short-sighted as to persevere in the course that Varrish had adopted, without foreseeing the inevitable consequence. In the face of the facts there was no room for misunderstanding.

He recovered his habitual composure with an effort, grasped my hand, muttered a barely audible, "Thank you," and hurried away. Puzzled as I had rarely been before, I watched the slim, black figure hastening along the snowy sidewalk until it was lost in the thickening dusk of a winter evening.

The night of Mrs. Adair's ball found me standing on the stoop of my house in Gramercy Park, expecting every moment to see the lamps of my belated cab swing around the corner and come swaying up the snow-banked street. The Park lay before me, a white expanse spotted with black shadows of shrubs and bushes, sharply silhouetted on the snow by the arc-lamps, and broken into plots by the dark lines

of paths from which the snow had been partially cleared away. In its center, like a melancholy and solitary guardian, stood the fountain swathed in a garment of straw. The branches of the trees, glazed with an icy coating and hung with pendant crystals, glistened in the clear moonlight.

I had just begun to feel the cold nipping my ears, despite the protection of a fur collar, and was turning into the house to mitigate the discomfort of delay before the library fire's glow, when a white-capped domestic, presenting a comical picture of ruffled neatness, came slipping up the sawdust-sprinkled steps. "The doctor!" she gasped, "The doctor!"

It was a rare occurrence for me to be bothered with a call of any urgency. As a physician patronized largely by society, I enjoyed a lucrative if not heroic practice, healing languid women of imaginary ills.

I declared my identity, however, and inquired of the frightened woman the cause of her obvious distress. Piecing together her breathless, broken phrases, I learned that her mistress, who was subject to heart failure, had suffered a sudden attack. "Oh, poor Madam!" she wailed, "Poor Madam!"

Consoling myself with an outworn platitude concerning business and pleasure, I expressed my willingness to assist the stricken lady and proceeded behind the servant, who skipped along ahead of me holding up her skirts in one hand, while she beckoned me on with the other, to a stately, old-fashioned, brown stone residence across the square. The door was ajar and we entered without delay a dimly-illuminated hallway. By the light of a single gas jet, encased in a reddish globe, I observed that the hall was bare of



"He took into supper the loveliest of the young married set."

See page 161

furniture, save for an old oak hat-rack with rusted cane rests, and opposite it a high-backed chair to match, the two standing stiffly erect against the wall like stolid sentinels at the gate of a medieval castle. A glimpse beyond, caught between faded portières, showed me a large gloomy room tenanted only by a table and a few chairs, their ghostly gray slips testifying to the melancholy desuetude into which they had fallen. The wall flanking the staircase bore a succession of steel engravings of Revolutionary patriots and etchings of old New York, arranged with pathetic and painstaking ingenuity to hide the discolored blots on the dingy wall paper.

At the landing the maid turned and motioned me into a room which opened on the head of the stairs. It was a bed-chamber, square and spacious, with high ceilings, the heavy old-fashioned furniture and dull decorations unaffected by the esthetic advance of half a century. About it hung the same melancholy air of faded opulence, of respectable if shabby gentility, that pervaded the hall.

In the center of the room, in a circle of yellow light from a shaded lamp, sat a white-haired old lady, her thin figure clad in plain black silk, sharply outlined against the white pillows which propped her in an upright position. Her head lay back upon the pillows; her eyes were closed, her knitting needles were idle in her lap. Age had accentuated a profile naturally aquiline, until it was almost vulturine in its sharpness; protracted suffering had withered the wrinkled cheek and chalked it with the lifeless pallor of chronic invalidism. And yet severe, old and wrinkled as was the face, it conveyed the impression of past beauty; much, I suppose, as a with-

ered rose leaf no longer lovely in itself, calls up visions of the full-blown rose. I read birth and breeding in the faded nobleness of the high brow and in the small ears; pride in the fine sensitive nostrils, pride in the thin, compressed lips; indeed the whole figure seemed eloquent of aristocratic disdain, its every line symbolic of an unhumiliated pride, a pride asserting itself in these faded surroundings like a tattered banner still flying from the walls of a battered fortress.

After administering restoratives, giving directions to the maid, and satisfying myself that my patient was in a condition to pass the night comfortably, I prepared to go. On the threshold I paused to advise her to retire immediately, raising an admonishing finger against the over-taxing of her strength by late hours. To my surprise she flared up at this natural suggestion, resisting it with no little energy.

"Late hours!" she exclaimed, "Humph! I've kept late hours during the season ever since I made my debut forty years ago last January. Now that I can't go out myself, I make it a point to sit up and see my son off to fill my place." She waved the importuning attendant aside with a feeble gesture of command.

I ventured mildly to protest. "You are a very sick woman, madam, and I strongly advise——"

She cut me short peremptorily: "I repeat that I never retire until I have seen my son start out to fulfill his social obligations. Young men are inclined to shirk such things." The supervision of her son's social career was evidently at once her chief duty and her chief delight. "To-night, you know, is the night of Mrs. Adair's ball," she continued. "He will be in presently to kiss me good-night before starting."

In the midst of my vain expostulation, continued more from a sense of duty than a hope of success, the old lady suddenly started upright among her pillows, a faint spot of color glowing on her cheek. I listened. The creak of footsteps descending the stairs came from the hall. She gripped my arm, her fingers closing on it with tense, nervous force.

"Get behind me into the shadow. Don't let my son see you." Her tone wavered between command and appeal. "If he thought me ill he would never go to the ball. It would break my heart if the family were not represented at the biggest dance of the season."

Somewhat mystified, I withdrew into a dim corner of the room and stood there half hidden in the dingy window hangings. The old lady meanwhile impatiently motioned the maid to rearrange her pillows, carefully smoothed out her skirt, and then sat stiffly upright, her eyes expectantly fixed on the door.

There was a moment of suspense, a hesitant knock, and then the door opened to admit a young man in evening clothes. He stepped quickly to the old lady's side and, stooping over her, touched his lips to the withered cheek with the tenderness of a caress. As he raised his head the light fell full on his face—I recognized Benedict Varrish.

Unconscious of a shadowy third, he seated himself on the arm of his mother's chair and took her hand gently in both of his. Mrs. Varrish, now completely engrossed in her son, had, I became aware, quite forgotten my inconsiderable presence; and despite the fact that I was an unwilling witness to the scene that followed, I felt guilty of eavesdropping, of profanely prying into a privacy which the least reverent hold sacred.

"Still up, dearest?" he asked in a

tone of quiet raillery; "haven't I forbidden you to sit up so late? Who ever heard of a son afflicted with so disobedient a parent?" Her face had visibly brightened with her son's appearance, and at his kiss so softened that I wondered how I could have thought it severe. Now his effort at smiling playfulness found a reflected light in her face.

"You know you wouldn't have felt quite right if I hadn't waited," she replied, smiling up into his face, adding, "attention to the correct performance of your social obligations is the only duty my health permits me to discharge to society. The regular observance of that little duty makes me feel still in contact with the fashionable world like a hand touched in the dark." Her son patted her cheek very gently, and turned his head away so that she might not see the shadow of an inward pain which passed across his face. Looking at him I fancied that he had aged considerably since he left me on the club stoop; mental anguish had traced its story on his face.

"I was reading about the Burton's dinner-dance in the evening papers," she continued. "From all accounts it must have been a very brilliant affair. The description of the figures and favors quite dazzles one of my old-fashioned, conservative views. In the list of guests it pleased me not a little to find the good old name of Varrish among many, I am sorry to say, which were never heard mentioned among nice people in my day."

Picturing to herself the brilliant ball-room, the swing of the music and the gay whirl of the bejeweled, brightly-gowned women and black-coated men, the dear old lady became almost vivacious; there was a youthful sparkle in the watery eyes,

a recollection of youth in the sprightly tones of the quavering voice, and at the mention of the Varrish name pride revived the color in her faded cheeks.

Her son stroked the thin blue-veined hands, and smiled reassuringly. If the sound of jeering laughter rang in his ears, it called forth in his heart no answering echo of bitterness or of regret.

Mrs. Varrish leaned forward, laying a shaking hand on his knee. "Now tell me all about the ball," she urged. "Who was there? With whom did you dance? You haven't even told me whom you took in to supper." There was a note of mild reproach in her voice at a reticence inexplicable to her. Its cause was apparent to me, and I wondered by what tactful evasion he would avoid the questions. Whatever the issue, anxiety to spare him the added humiliation of my presence impelled me, despite my patient's strict injunction, to come forward from my shadowed retreat.

As I stepped from the gloomy outskirts of the room into the circle of bright light, Varrish started up with a low exclamation. His mother, following the line of his astonished gaze, discovered me standing at her side in an embarrassed silence that cried out for explanation. "This young man is the doctor," she explained; "Elise, silly woman, lost her head and called him in." Varrish turned again to me, an anxious query in his contracted brows, chagrin at my presence quite swallowed up in concern for his mother.

But Mrs. Varrish, intercepting the question in the look, forestalled the answer. "It was nothing," she exclaimed somewhat impatiently, "a touch of nerves—nothing more serious. I haven't been so strong in years." She flashed me a look

which hinted at undefined but dire consequences to follow a denial of the fib, and waived me aside with a gesture, temporarily excluding me from her world.

"Tell me about the dance, dear," she repeated, settling herself deliberately back among the pillows with the air of a bon-vivant seating himself to the epicurean enjoyment of a cobwebbed bottle. "Did old Mrs. Claridge really put in an appearance? Goodness me, she came out in my year. It was a mooted question which one of us made the prettiest debutante. I always suspected her of setting her cap at your poor, dear father." She closed her eyes for a minute, smiling to herself at the recollection of this ancient triumph, no doubt tasting again its zest in retrospect.

I looked at Varrish. He had drawn up a chair and now sat facing his mother, his legs crossed, his finger-tips touching. His face was white and wore a set, cheerless smile; beads of perspiration stood on his forehead below the line of his hair. Otherwise his manner might have suggested the easy loquacity of the raconteur.

"I only wish, dearest, that you could have been there to enjoy it with me. Everybody said that it was the most successful entertainment of the year." He paused for a breath's space, and met my eye over his mother's head. The look was at once defiant and pleading; it touched in passing the white head bent in interest to his words, as if in justification of the part he was about to play, and laid a finger on the lip of dissent, demanding, if not an expressed, at least, a tacit indorsement of the deception. Then he dropped his eyes to the level of the old lady's, and lied deliberately, fluently, without faltering.

It was an admirable fiction, a purely imaginative description of the Burton's dance, a vivid representation of the usual ball sprinkled with the names of the society leaders of the day. I heard him describe the gold and white ball-room, the walls banked ceiling-high with American Beauty roses, the brilliant throng of dancers moving to the music of an invisible orchestra, the brilliance and the beauty and the grace of it all. I heard him dwell upon the fluffy, beribboned prettiness of the debutantes, the bejeweled elegance of the younger matrons, the jet and lace majesty of the elder dames; heard him tell how he danced three times with the belle of the season, and took in to supper the loveliest of the young married set; dilate on the daring art of Miss Burton's frock, the splendor of Mrs. Burton's tiara, the wonder of Mrs. Adair's famous rope of pearls, neglecting no artful touch, omitting no realistic detail which might lend verisimilitude to his story; while the entranced old lady contributed her share to the conversation in little expressive gestures, smiles and smothered ejaculations, at some unfamiliar name, dolorously shaking her head with a muttered exclamation to the effect that society was no longer as exclusive as it was fifty years ago, throwing up her hands at the account of some frivolity or extravagance unheard of in the decorous days of old, and at the mention of a courtesy bestowed upon her son by some august dame or a solicitous inquiry for her health from the lips of some notorious beau, her stiff old figure assumed a conscious erectness, like a decrepit veteran reminded of the fields of his youthful conquests.

A perfunctory drone in Varrish's voice, suggesting the habitual churchgoer's recital of a creed, long

after meaningless repetition has robbed it of its dogmatic significance, gave me a clue, and as I listened, the unaccountable course of the man's recent actions smoothed itself out before my mind's eye like the page of a crumpled scroll. At last the mystery of Varrish's social aspirations was cleared up. It often happens that when we tear aside the leering mask of comedy, we come unexpectedly face to face with tragedy's tearful visage. We find that we have been laughing at the clown, careless of the channels tears cut in the white paint.

I comprehended the scope of Varrish's ordeal; I understood his self-imposed martyrdom. His mother, dear, proud old aristocrat, lived upon the illusion that her historic name, once a name to conjure with in the Knickerbocker assemblies of old New York, was still a magical password to the august abodes of a society which years ago had forgotten its very existence; all the feeble forces of her waning life fed upon the fancied social triumphs of her son as the honored scion of that name; and he had piously consecrated himself to the mission of filling for her the social void created by a callous world, sacrificing, when it became necessary, pride, dignity, and the dear respect of his fellows, to preserve to her these fancied riches, to spare her a forlorn recognition of the truth that the society she loved and venerated was no longer alive to the subtle quality of breeding, that entrance to its portals was now a matter of barter rather than of birth. There was no doubt matter for comedy in this ancient lady's delight in a chimerical crown created by her son's artful fictions, but as I listened, it was the pathos rather than the irony of the situation that came home to me. If there had

been a laugh in me, a glance at Varrish's white, set face, must have choked it in my throat.

The narrative done, Mrs. Varrish turned to me. She evidently expected to see me duly impressed with the magnificence of her son's social position, and I endeavored not to disappoint her. "One hears a deal of talk now-a-days about society degenerating into a money market. I have always maintained that such talk is a malicious slander on an exclusive aristocracy. I need only cite the welcome that every house in town has for my son, as a Varrish, to prove my contention. I trust that I shall not live to see the day when New York society places birth and breeding below bank accounts."

She looked at me as if including me among the slanderers, and anticipating a challenge to her statement. I inclined my head in tacit acquiescence, and Varrish repaid me with a glance of gratitude.

The silence that ensued was terminated by the sound of a distant church-tower chiming the hour. "Gracious me!" exclaimed the old lady, "how a little chat does run into one's time! Be off now to the ball, and mind don't forget to present my regards to Mrs. Adair."

On the threshold Varrish paused, a hesitant hand on the door-knob. "Perhaps, dearest, I would better stay with you to-night."

His mother straightened herself up in her chair and replied with some asperity: "Nonsense! nonsense! What would become of society's functions if every headache in a family was the cue for a general desertion? Why I can remember attending many a dinner, at which my position required my presence, on black coffee brandy in direct disobedi-

dience to my doctor's orders."

We left her relating to her attendant an anecdote of a memorable repartee of which she had acquitted herself at the time of the Prince of Wales' visit, and passed down stairs and into the white street in silence.

At the corner of the square Varrish took my hand and held it for a long moment in a friendly grasp. I wanted to tell him that I understood, but was conscious of the inadequacy of words to translate the delicacy of my sentiments. Tact forbade blunt sympathy, so I returned the pressure of his hand in silence, and hurried away alone to Mrs. Adair's ball.

For a month after my memorable visit to the Varrish House in Gramercy Park, I heard or saw very little of Benedict Varrish. Once, to be sure, I learned from Beverly that while Varrish no longer solicited invitations, he still exhibited a vulgar interest in the doings of the "crowned heads." Beverly was inclined to think that he was reporting society for some journal.

Then one morning I came across a brief announcement of Mrs. Varrish's death in the obituary column of a daily paper. The old aristocrat had passed forever out of society. By a curious irony, the little notice owed its transient prominence to the fact that a distant relative of the deceased lady had married into a *bourgeois* family of many millions.

After the funeral I heard that Varrish had obtained a diplomatic appointment and was going to live abroad. The knowledge that his martyrdom was at an end I welcomed with a sense of relief, and a hope that his future life would accord him just compensation for the pious sacrifices of his past.

The Promised Land.



By Clinton Dangerfield

Anderson had been watching the couple for some time. They interested him, he told himself, because these two women were the only passengers in the westward-speeding coach besides himself.

The girl's delicate, colorless face was too thin for beauty, though its very spareness made all the more observable the exquisite beauty of her darkly violet eyes, well shaded by long lashes that had in their quality something infantine and appealing, reminiscent of her childhood in spite of her age, which evidently lay between twenty-eight and thirty.

The mother, over whom she hovered with a reversal of the usual parental attitude, was as delicate in countenance as her daughter. The women were scarcely above medium height, but the younger seemed several inches the taller, by virtue of her slender erectness, over the stoop which time had set in her mother's middle-aged shoulders.

In reality it was not the scarcity of passengers, nor, at first, the lovely eyes of the younger woman which interested and finally fascinated the young man behind them. It was the radiant light that illumined the faces of both; not spasmodically but steadily, like the touch of a lambent flame. They looked as pilgrims might who were nearing a marvelous Mecca, where all sorrows should be

put away and peaceful happiness reign forever.

Whenever their heads turned toward the window, and this happened often, Anderson could see this spiritual glow plainly; but he fancied it so much a part of them that it seemed to him to find expression in their whole bodies, to radiate outward with every gesture. He heard it in the voices; sweet, well-modulated voices, evidently the tones of gentlewomen, though their unfashionable, rather worn garments spoke of country breeding.

Anderson, who had tried most of the world's recipes for joy and found some necessary ingredient lacking in all of them, began to wonder, with a sort of jealous amazement, what these simple women possessed which outranked the golden shower that his father poured so freely on his only son.

At last he determined to investigate. When the train stopped at Latona and the conductor howled out the twenty-minute limit for refreshments, the girl arose hurriedly:

"You stay right here, mother," she said decidedly, "and I'll bring you in something myself. I won't have you in that twenty-minute crowd."

Anderson followed the speaker, and no sooner had she reached the platform than, lifting his hat, he said with grave courtesy, "Suppose you

eat your luncheon and let me look after your mother. I will see that a tray goes to her instantly, and I will sit by her myself."

The girl's face, which had hardened as his hat rose, now softened as he spoke. His calm, almost gentle voice, his suggestion which seemed wholly for her mother's benefit, carried him past her usual keen reserve. She smiled.

"Why, thank you," she said. "Yes, you may if you like."

The eating-room was well crowded, for though the Pullman in which the trio traveled had been so empty, the same condition did not hold good in the less expensive coaches.

The girl found herself hurried to a chair by her new acquaintance. His sharp, quick command forced the waiter's attention to her first of all. She caught no glimpse of the tip which added a halo to her head in the waiter's mind; she only thought the negro remarkably well trained and deft.

The remainder of the table did not tarry for the aid of the single waiter. They served themselves, busily and hastily, from the dishes already waiting them. A red-faced, hungry farmer bellowed into the girl's ear a request to "pass them onions, please!" with a suddenness that made her start and then laugh as her eyes met his.

"Didn't mean to frighten ye, miss," he grinned, as he drove the spoon, shovel-wise, under the white bulbs. "Feller only has so much time here, ye know, and if he don't everlastingly hustle he gits left and loses half the money he put into the grub." The last part of his sentence died chokily away as an onion slipped into his cavernous mouth.

Mindful of the possibility of such a loss on her other neighbor's part,

the girl asked her right-hand table associate if she could hand her anything.

The woman, hard-featured, offensively self-poised, shook her head. "I kin reach," she said laconically; and indeed the length of her muscular arms bore out the statement. The girl from the Pullman began her own lunch with keen enjoyment, eating with the gusto of one who has no anxieties, and to whom such a state of mind is deliciously new and uplifting.

When the latter returned to the Pullman she found her mother, a little flush in her cheeks from the stimulus lent by the lunch, in happy conversation with the stranger. The girl smiled at the pair, such a smile as one might give two children who are contented and out of mischief. She herself dropped wordlessly into the seat before them, which Anderson had cunningly prepared in readiness, and, showing no disposition to join in the conversation, she leaned her chin on her hand and gazed out of the window.

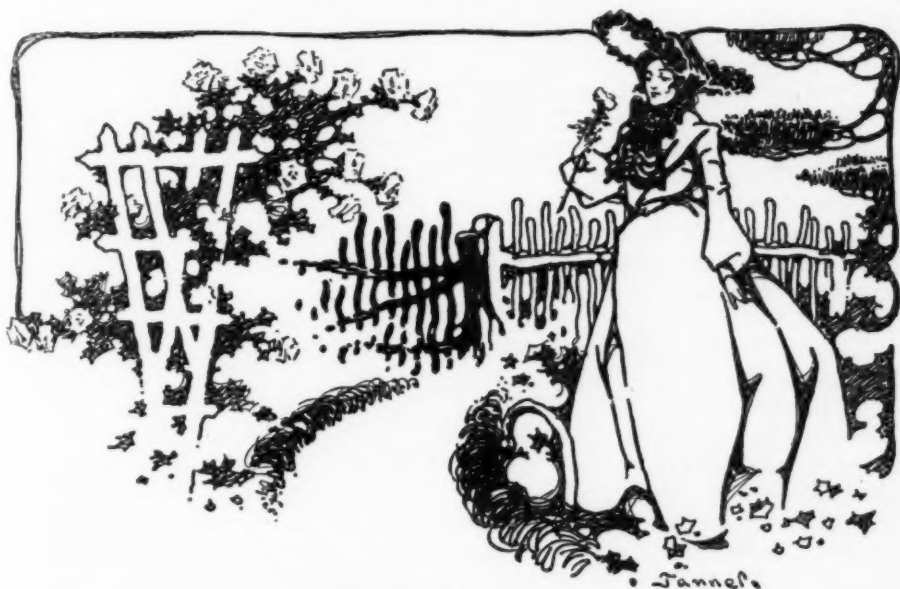
"And so your name's Anderson, Charles Anderson," said the old lady softly. "Why, I used to know a Charley Anderson when I was young. Are you from Kentucky?"

Anderson shook his head. "My people are New Yorkers, have been for several generations. Do you claim Kentucky?"

"Oh, no," she said, with gentle decision, "we are Georgians. As a girl I lived in Savannah, but when my husband died and the Central failed, carrying nearly everything we owned, we had just enough, Alicia and I, to buy a little home in the piney woods."

The personal tone of these revelations roused the girl.

"Mother," she said gently, "I am afraid that this gentleman will not



“‘Wie Schön’ on Tuesday.”

care to hear those little details about us.”

“But indeed I do care,” declared Anderson with just sufficient earnestness to carry conviction and not to seem intrusive. “I should like to know whether you found the piney woods so charming that you will return to them, or whether you are basely deserting them now?”

The elder woman looked with significant and delighted meaning at her daughter.

“You don’t mind if I tell him, Alicia?” she said pleadingly.

Alicia flushed, the color restoring an evanescent glow of roundness to her thin face; it faded as rapidly as it came, however, destroying the illusion.

“Tell him anything you like, mother,” she said quietly, too unselfish to check the other’s sincere pleasure in possessing an interested listener. For what difference did those innocent revelations make, she told herself. After leaving this car they would never see the man again.

“Yes, we are leaving the piney woods,” breathed the mother elatedly, “leaving them for good! It was such a lonesome place—you just can’t imagine. We were quite shut in by the pines, except for the one big sandy road that ran past the house.” She laughed at the recollection as if it were years old. “That road, nobody ever went up or down except the piney woods crackers. Did you ever see a piney woods cracker?”

“Only in illustrations for stories in the magazines,” admitted Anderson.

“Well then, you just don’t know anything about them,” declared the old lady. “They always used to stop at my gate while I was trimming my flowers and drawl out, ‘Putty posies Mis’ Marshall—right putty posies.’”

“Was that such a bad remark?”

“Not till you have heard it about three hundred times from all ages, with exactly the same inflection each time, while you were just

'honing' for somebody really to admire your Jacqueminots and La Frances as they should be admired. That's why we are going," she ended gayly. "And Alicia would have me take a Pullman, because it's probably my last journey."

"I should think," hesitated Anderson, "that—that Miss Marshall's love for your roses would have compensated."

"Alicia?" said the old lady airily; "of course she loved them; but you want somebody else besides home folks to admire a thing when you've spent months over it. Alicia did all she could. She always wore a great bunch of them in her belt; she praised them continually. But though she's a good scholar and said 'charming' on Monday, '*wie schön*' on Tuesday, and '*magnifique*' on Wednesday, yet there was a sameness in the phrases, after a time!"

Anderson laughed. "And so you are going where roses can have a full court of adorers?"

"We are going to the loveliest place in the whole world," exulted Mrs. Marshall. "We came into a little inheritance, quite unexpectedly you know, and as good fortune never comes single we had a chance to sell the piney woods place for all it was worth and more. The inheritance wasn't much, you know, so I said we must find a growing town where a little money would go a long way, where we could buy a house and lot for a reasonable sum, and be sure of it's doubling in value in ten years."

"I see," murmured Anderson a little doubtfully. "And you are in search of such a place?"

"We have found it!" The tone was that of the intoxicate "Eureka" of the glad ancients. The simple phrase spoke volumes; and even Alicia forgot her secret disapproval

of this free acceptance of Anderson and let her soul sit shining in her eyes.

"You have found it!" repeated Anderson in some astonishment. "Evidently you are good investors. May I ask the name of the town?"

Mrs. Marshall dived into the bag at her feet and drew out a huge folded poster which she proceeded to spread over their laps.

"You shall see the prospectus for yourself," she said kindly. Anderson bending forward read the gorgeously printed headlines:

"The Coming Town of the Future! Beautiful Adrianapolis-on-the-Diamond River!! A Marvelous Chance for Investors!!!" Anderson straightened himself up in obvious surprise.

"Adrianapolis!" he said wonderingly; "you are going there? Why I'm *en route* to it myself. Is that where you're going to live?"

"Yes," nodded Mrs. Marshall, beaming at him. "And you are an investor, too? Maybe our lots lie near each other. Our house is Number Forty-eight, West Terrace."

"Oh no, I don't own any land there yet," returned the young man. "I'm merely going to stop over there twenty-four hours. A friend of mine who's going into it, wants to buy a dozen lots as a speculation and he asked me to stay over long enough to give him my opinion, or rather to select the lots for him. You see the president and promoter is my f— is a friend of mine."

His eyes returned to the poster

"You didn't take all this on trust, did you?" he asked curiously. "I'm satisfied myself that it's all right, because I know the man who got it up, but you——"

For the first time Alicia Marshall joined in:

"I was very careful," she said with the confidence of one who is

quite at rest; "you see the company gives many references, the Savings Bank at Adrianapolis, the Post-office, the Justice of the Peace, and seven leading merchants. We wrote to all, and they answered that things were exactly as represented."

"But as they were Adrianapolites," argued Anderson, more to

tographs cannot lie, you know."

Unaccustomed as he was to business life—his father looked on an heir as a luxury to be guarded and supported—Anderson could scarcely conceal a smile at this naïve statement.

"Let us hope that it will be even better than the photographs," he



"Where did dad get such a list of unknown geniuses?"

keep the ball rolling than out of any distrust of what this western infant city might be, "do you think they could be called disinterested?"

"The president of the Savings Bank sent us photographs," returned Alicia a little haughtily. "We have pictures of all the largest buildings, of part of the main street, of our part of West Terrace; and pho-

said, and turned his attention again to the poster on which Mrs. Marshall was pointing out the numerous advantages of Adrianapolis and the well-defined reasons for its rapid growth.

"Such nice people live there, too," she pursued. "Why there are half a dozen authors—quite a colony of literary people." She read

aloud the names of the half dozen.

"No doubt they've all been in print," conceded Anderson, adding under his breath, "Where the deuce did Dad get such a list of unknown geniuses?"

Then he fell again to watching the two women. This, then, was their Mecca, this the secret of that illumination that beautified them both—Adrianapolis - on - the - Diamond! And to reach Adrianapolis they must get out at the next station, for the switch connecting the city of the future with the railway was yet in embryo. However, it would attain completion presently, Mrs. Marshall assured Anderson, and meantime steamers touched at the Adrianapolis wharf; you could reach the railway by water if you wished.

The driver of the Adrianapolis Hotel omnibus met them at the station and loaded their trunks as well as themselves into his ample vehicle. Anderson, who had been inclined to ride outside, changed his mind and sat again beside Mrs. Marshall, who was gazing silently at the forlorn little station, and then at the equally forlorn country through which the horses trotted. She never doubted that it would prove all the better foil to the young city where their home lay, and when the driver pulled up in a field of red mud which was irregularly splotched with houses, she impatiently asked him why they halted there.



"Anderson strode up and down."

"Dis am de Adrianapolis Hotel, missus," returned the negro, jumping down, adding loudly to a slatternly girl on the wide piazza surrounding the really large, rambling house:

"Deelyuh, axe Mis' Hunter ef she gwine 'ceive dese ladies?"

The girl, more offensive in her Caucasian frowziness than a negress could ever have been, came leisurely down the high steps, dragging her broom behind her.

"Jest come right in, all of you," she drawled. "Mis' Hunter she had to go down the river this mornin'—but she tole me to git supper an' make ever'thing comfortable."

Alicia, stepping out, fastened a searching gaze on the landscape. "Is this Adrianapolis?" she demanded of the slattern, speaking in a harsh, strained voice, unrecognizable as belonging to the excellent tones Anderson had heard in the Pullman.

"Of cose it is," drawled the girl, hitching the broom up as far as her hip.

Again Alicia scrutinized the red desolation, and now observed that the seemingly irregular houses were in line with mysterious rows of pegs and stakes. She pointed toward these: "Those pegs," she demanded of the negro, "what do they mean?"

"Lord, missie," returned the good-humored driver, "they pegs is part of de town. Dats de onliest way we kin tell de streets fum each odder. Dat row of pegs ober dar fr' instance,

is West Terrace. Dat leetle house setting dar on dat red clay bank, dat Number Forty-eight where you all is to live."

"That," cried Mrs. Marshall, her lately illumined face an unspeakable masque of tragedy, "that is not *my* house! *Where* is the grassy square near it? The fountain in the square? The river just behind it?"

"Grass looked pert enough in de spring," said the negro, leaning over the double-tree to unfasten a trace, "but dis yere droust done 'stroy it—it gwine be dat way ever' year. As to dat fountain, 'tain't nebber gwine run—de water lebbel ain't strong 'nough. An' as fo' de ribber, missus, it's so like de color ob de ground dat you kain't see it well fum here, but at Forty-eight you see it—an' smell hit, too," he added under his breath.

"But the people," persisted Mrs. Marshall, "where are the people? Except for that pig over yonder, it looks like a deserted place! Is everybody dead?" she cried hysterically.

"No, no, missus," said the driver comfortingly, "we got most twenty folks here now. All dem what had money to git away done gone, an you shore of steady comp'ny in what's lef'."

As if words now failed her, the woman clasped to her breast a paste-board box she was carrying, a long, deep box which crushed under the strain, and from which fell a shower of magnificent roses.

The slattern looked interested.

"Them's right putty posies," she drawled, then stared, dumfounded and frightened, on the attack of hysterics which her words produced in the elder lady.

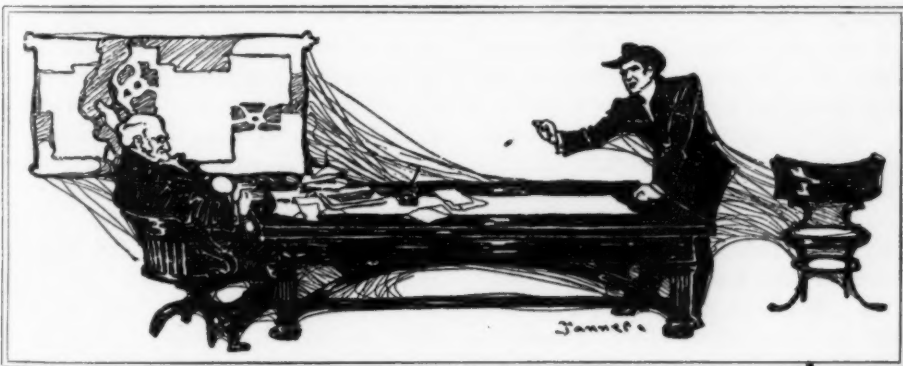
When Mrs. Marshall was at last sleeping exhaustedly in one of the dingy hotel rooms, Alicia, sitting by her, might even in her misery have pitied Anderson because of the storm boiling in his breast as he strode up and down his own room.

"Oh, my God," he cried, "he cannot claim that he did not know—he promoted it. He should have known. And because those lies were on paper——"

He snatched up his hat and flung from the hotel. Following the driver's directions he went straight to a two-story building with large plate glass windows, labeled in huge gilt letters:

"Citizens Savings Bank."

"I want to see the president," he demanded curtly of the youth behind the upright netting of wire and bars.



"You are merely a gang of sharpers."

"Deposit money at this winder," suavely suggested the other, rolling his cigar.

"I want to see the president! And quick at that," retorted Anderson so fiercely that the youth hastily motioned him toward an inner door.

"In there," he said hurriedly, adding to himself as Anderson went in without the ceremony of knocking, "Holy Moses, some of these suckers will knock the top off of Goodwind's head some day, before he has time to make his spiel."

But Goodwind, although there were times when he thought his work deserved higher remuneration, and grew discouraged, was too much of an artist to permit the use of such crude methods. In spite of Anderson's fury he found himself listening to Goodwind's smooth, plausible voice as the president said deprecatingly, "Really, sir, your anger is uncalled for! We can't help the mud—we plant grass every earthly spring—yes, sir, we do! Eventually we feel confident of a fine growth! As to that fountain, as to all the waterworks, we've had difficulties lately—but all cities have such things to contend with."

"Every pipe in the infernal place is dry," thundered Anderson.

"That's the fault of the present citizens. They said the water smelt, and used language about it—yes, sir—their own fault! At present, in order to meet their objections, we supply spring water by carts."

"At an outrageous price per gallon," stormed Anderson. "As for the river smelling, how can anybody use water which the negro informs me is full of filth from the drain pipes of the real town above you?"

"I should consider that a misstatement," said the president mildly.

"Your fake photographs," went

on Anderson, "give one the idea of a well-populated town, and here I find your houses dotted blocks apart!"

"Fake is an unjust word, sir," said the president, taking up a file and beginning to clean his nails, an operation that exasperated Anderson beyond words. "It is true those photographs represent only sections, artistic portions as it were, of our infant giantess, but they are none the less real. If you, sir, or any others, choose to imagine more than you had a right to expect, it is really your own fault."

"The language of your circulars would do for a corner of paradise," stormed Anderson, "and here I find an obviously unhealthy hole, situated in a depression, on a filthy, muddy river, with not a single attraction in it—not one!" He paused a moment in sheer bitterness as he thought of the exquisite light on those gentle faces while they went Mecca-ward, and the tragedy of hope surrendered forever written on them now. "You are merely a gang of sharpers," he cried.

"Sir," said the much enduring bank president, "nothing but my religion and my prominent position in this town prevents me from chastising you. Let me tell you, sir, the wording of that circular was composed by the promoter of the Adrianapolis Land and General Improvement Company—Mr. Andrew Anderson, one of New York's wealthiest men, and, sir, in this very building! He saw none of the disagreeable features *you* pretend to discover!"

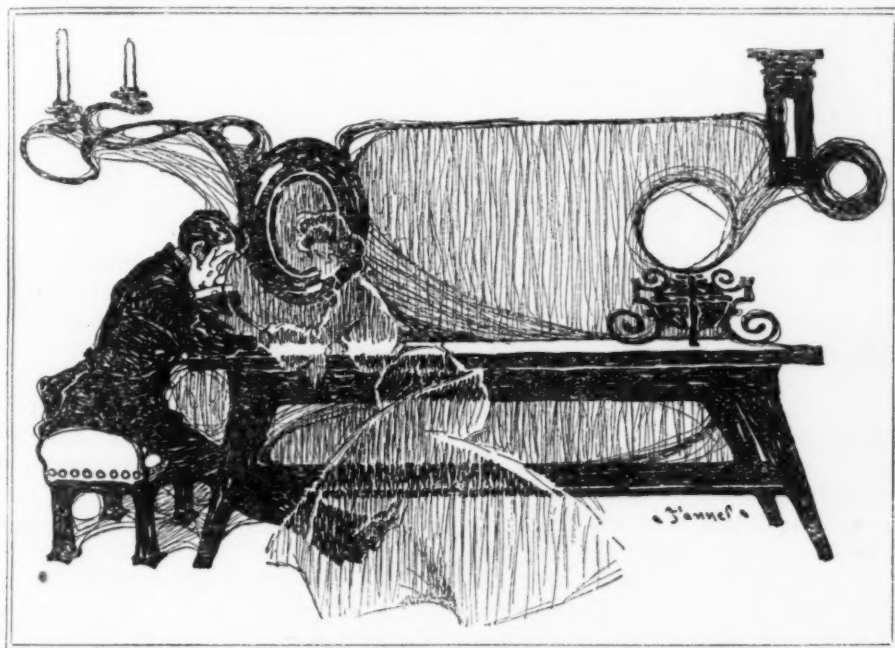
Anderson went white as death. He had been so sure that in some way he would find his father had not been to blame after all. And now this man had ignorantly driven home the true state of affairs.

That afternoon, just as Farlow, the best real estate agent in Bayville, five miles above Adrianapolis-on-the-Diamond, was about to leave his office, he was stayed by a broad-shouldered, determined young man, who announced in few words what he wanted.

"A small, well-built house," he said tersely, "on a broad lot covered with grass and plenty of roses. It

It was nearly noon next day before he saw the Marshalls again. When he did, his cool effrontery concealed the sickening shame gnawing him inside. He walked straight up to Alicia and took her hand.

"Look again as you did in the Pullman," he said in a low tone. "I have seen that scoundrel at the bank, and made him refund your—our money."



"Anderson found himself strangely haunted."

must be in your best residence portion, and sure, in your judgment, to increase rapidly in value."

The agent lifted his eyebrows.

"Exactly such pieces of property are rare," he remarked dryly, "although we may possibly suit you. Bayville is a pretty place, our altitude saves us from the red mud those sharpers at Adrianapolis are using"—Anderson winced cruelly—"and everything flourishes here. Tomorrow morning—"

"Now!" interrupted Anderson.

"Refunded—oh, thank God!" gasped the girl, and then she cried with new sharpness, "but you—you said you had not invested?"

"I thought not," said Anderson dryly, "but I found that certain circumstances had involved me heavily."

"We can never repay your kindness," said Mrs. Marshall, a solemn thankfulness in her eyes, though the old pilgrim light of joyous certainty was dead forever. "We will go back to the piney woods and finish our lives there."

"Not until you've looked at a bit of property offered you in Bayville for the same price you would have invested here," said Anderson cheerily.

He had his reward when he saw the eager surprise and delight of the two women over the cosy, rose-covered cottage on Bayville's loveliest street; a cottage set in the midst of a broad green-mantled lot. If the almost supernatural lambent flame of happiness that once had irradiated their features was gone, none the less their present delight was highly contagious.

"So cheap for such a situation," repeated Mrs. Marshall gleefully for the third time, whereat the accompanying Farlow, who knew that Anderson had just paid three times the sum Mrs. Marshall invested in the pretty home, chuckled to himself.

It was a year before Anderson saw the Marshalls again, a year during which he found himself strangely haunted by a pair of exquisite violet eyes, long lashed, appealing. He would not admit the fact to himself, and when he once more lifted the gate latch he avowed inwardly that he was chiefly interested in the roses now rioting everywhere.

It was Alicia who saw him first, from the shady piazza, and who

called out gayly as he came up the steps:

"Is it really you? It is Tuesday morning, you know. Have you come to save me from saying, '*wie schön*'?"

"*Wie schön! Wie morgenscön!*" repeated Anderson earnestly, but it was not of the roses he spoke, but of a transformed Alicia whose rounded beauty now matched her glorious eyes.

She blushed. He caught her hand once more.

"Alicia," he said, "you have been thinking of me!"

As he spoke his face glowed with the swift conviction that there were no such eyes elsewhere—not in the universe.

She turned away, confused, but not repellant. "How can I ever forget you—after your rescue of us from the wretch who originated Adrianapolis?"

"The wretch, as you call him, is my father," said Anderson steadily. "Adrianapolis is a thing of the past now, and he has restored all the money invested there. Can you forgive him?"

Her mobile face which had showed keen suffering at his first words, flushed again.

"There never was an Adrianapolis," she said with sudden gayety. "Will you come into the house?"





On the Way Over

From Reminiscences of the Girlhood
of Gwladwys Struyver



EDITED BY ELIZABETH PHIPPS TRAIN

I think I have somewhere stated that, at an early date in my history, Mamma and Papa had agreed to a dislocation of the marriage bond. For what cause I have never discovered. It is the one subject on which the lips of my mother are hermetically sealed. And, influenced by this remarkable and exceptional discretion on her part, I have ever abstained from pressing upon her that claim which obtains inherently in every child—the right to know something of both its parents. If it is a wise child, however, that knoweth its own father, it is a wiser that comprehendeth its own mother—at a glance. The advantage of understanding dear Mamma by visual exploration, occurred to me at an early age. And yet, I was by no means a precocious youngster. Therefore, I argue that Mamma must have been possessed of exceptional characteristics that sharpened my intellect in her regard.

I think I should have grown up in doubt as to whether I had really ever been blessed with a supplementary parent, had the fact not been impressed on my mind by a conversation which I one night overheard between my nurse and one of the housemaids, after I had gone to bed. At the time, I did not take in the complete significance of it, but later it recurred to me, and I was enabled to interpret it correctly. It was undoubtedly the rehearsal by my nurse of an attempt, which she had overheard, on my part to extract from Mamma some information upon this delicate subject.

"'An,' says she," I heard the woman say, "'I had a papa, then?' says she. 'Av coorse ye had, choild,' says Mrs. Struyver. 'Where's he gone, then, Mamma?' asks Miss Gwladwys, as cute as could be. An' Mrs. Struyver, she says, 'Shure, it's gone away entoirely he has, Gwladwys,' says she. 'An' that's enough for a little girl to know.' 'Gone to Heaven, has he?' asks the choild. The poor little lamb! And wid that, the mother just turns an' gives her wan look. 'To Heaven!' says she, wid a quare laugh. 'Well, no, certainly not to Heaven,' she says."

And that's as much about my father as I have ever been able to glean, either directly or by indirection from Mamma. I only knew positively that the Gates of Paradise had not opened to receive my father. Two other places remained to my imagination as a choice of location for him. And, intuitively, I felt him not to be a disembodied spirit. Ergo, Earth still cherished him.

Mamma recovered her maiden name with her divorce, and the Struyvers are all New York people. Of my father's relatives and place of origin I knew nothing. I believed them, however, to be Canadian, though on what this conjecture was grounded I could not say. For some unknown reason I located Papa across the border.

A year ago last May I went over to London with the Drayles of Philadelphia for the Coronation, and for a taste of the London season. Connie Drayle married Lord Rexworthy

and she was going to put us up and do for us while we were there. Our party consisted of Colonel and Mrs. Drayle, Lina and myself, with our respective servants.

A friendship of long standing exists between Lina and me, based on the fact that we are excellent foils to each other and attract quite opposite men. I, you know, am *chataigne* and Lina is a delicious *brune aux yeux bleus*. The same men never like us both. Even on the rebound, I should never catch the fancy of a man Lina had turned down, and she would offer no charm to one of my admirers. There can be no stronger and more inherent basis of feminine friendship than that. We had nothing to fear from each other.

The Deutschland, on that trip, was simply a floating drawing-room of the cream of metropolitan society, with a sprinkling of the swell mob of other cities.

The sea was actually like a Gargantuan mill-pond, and dinner was a function of quite gorgeous splendor. Women wore their bravest gowns and men their fairest shave. Evening clothes were an unwritten law of ship-board etiquette and the entire crossing seemed like a big house-party under novel conditions.

A man sat next me at table, whose exceeding good looks caught my notice from the start. Lina, too, had her eye on him, and we had a dozen pairs of Dent's dogskins up on his taste in women. He seemed a bit out of it in the mutually-acquainted crowd, and on deck appeared to be of a different social feather from those gay birds that congregated in noisy flocks. Not that he wasn't a gentleman. The closest scrutiny of his table manners failed to detect him in any offense against good breeding, while on a

larger scale his deportment appeared to be that of a most "parfit gentil knight."

He was a man somewhere in the forties, I should think, of that sort of masculine physique that suggests steel—slender in build, but with muscles apparently knit and trained to perfection. I used to like to sit on deck and watch him pace up and down, or stop to lean against the rail and lose himself in contemplation of the distant horizon. I have never seen a man or woman whose movements could compare with his in that absolute balance of parts which we call grace. And, before I became acquainted with him, and, indeed, afterward also, I used to wonder what were the subjects of those long reveries with which his mind seemed engrossed.

At luncheon, the third day out, he passed me the salt, or something of which I appeared to stand in need. I thanked him with a degree of cordiality which caused Mrs. Drayle to level her lorgnette at him, and even made the colonel glance up from his beef. At dinner, we arrived at table a little in advance of him, and I saw to it that the peppers and salts were beyond his, and within my reach. Which gave me a natural chance to reciprocate his earlier attentions. He showed little disposition to improve the opportunity I offered him, however, and thereafter, Lina made it her business, before sitting down, to dispose the condiments comfortably to his hand, as he rarely appeared until after we were well into the menu.

We had made about half the crossing when, one night, chancing to look out for a moment after dinner, I saw that the moon was full and the sea a symphony in black and silver. The decks were flooded with soft light, but the wind was blowing

somewhat fresh and a concert had been announced in the ladies' salon. Besides which, bridge held the major part of the passenger list in its strong grip, so that there were few abroad to enjoy the beauties of the night.

I have a passion for moonlight under certain conditions, as I sup-

pose every properly constituted girl has, and a tiny red spark which glowed in the bows against the upper part of a figure silhouetted in the moonlight, announced to me that, in the present instance, the conditions were favorable. But I was in for bridge and did not very well see how it was possible for me to avail myself of them. As I pondered, however, it suddenly came home to me that I was in a *milieu* where, above all others, sudden defections are to be managed. There was scarcely any sea on, to be sure, but the individual idiosyncrasies of

the human stomach are beyond suspicion on shipboard and of no mean value as resources in social exigencies. I went up to Mrs. Van Stettin's *salon de luxe* with my method of retreat perfectly arranged.

The game started in with as great a display of interest on my part as

if I had no thoughts or projects in life beyond those centered in a deck of cards. But, even while the first hand was being dealt I drew upon myself not a little raillery by conveying to my mouth from the tiny bonbonnière that hung on my purse-chain a soda-mint. Perhaps I might have performed the action less

openly had I wished. But I bore their jollying with perfect good nature, conscious of the design I had up my sleeve.

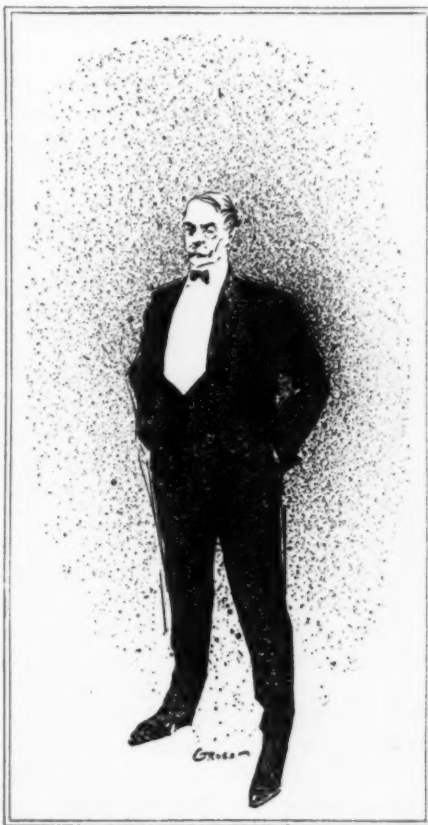
"It's that miserable 'royal shandy-gaff' that the colonel will drink," I said. "I'd so much rather have either the fizz or Burgundy straight, for my part. My digestion stoutly maintains that the red and white have ever been enemies since the Wars of the Roses."

"Except," put in Ned Donner, looking up at me from over the cards he was sorting, "when they join issue in a woman's face to work the undoing of some poor devil who is

trying to lead a peaceful life and mind his own business."

"Speaking of minding your own business, Ned," said Billy Ten Eyck, who was playing with Lina, "what did you think of Sloane's interference in the smoking-room this afternoon?"

"I thought it a confounded piece



"A man somewhere in the forties."

of meddlesome impertinence," Donner replied. "If I'd been that chap I'd have rounded him up for it."

"Rather thoroughbred the way the fellow took it, it struck me."

"Quite so; made Sloane look like thirty cents."

"What was it?" asked Mamie Van Stettin, who was watching the game over Lina's shoulder.

"Oh, the national game," said Donner. "Bentley, Bocher, Ten Eyck, myself and a stranger chap—that fellow, by the way, that sits next you at table, Miss Struyver—were holding the papes, Sloane looking on. There was a jack-pot on, and the deal had passed twice with no openers. Finally, this stranger fellow opened it to the limit, ten dollars, and drew one card, having presumably split his openers, as he kept his discard beside him on the table. Apparently most of the men had drawn to their satisfaction, as the betting ran up till there was about four hundred dollars in the pot. Then all but Ten Eyck and the stranger dropped out, and, after a moment or two, Ten Eyck called. The fellow showed an ace heart flush and naturally raked the pot, exhibiting his openers, a pair of knaves."

"Then Sloane spoke up. Said he, 'See here, my friend, I thought I saw you put your draw where that knave of hearts is. How's that?' The man looked at him a moment in perfect good nature and opened his lips as if to explain. Then, the full meaning of Sloane's imputation seemed to come home to him and his face got crimson. He turned to the rest of us, completely ignoring Sloane. 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'it is you with whom I am playing. I leave it to your common sense as to whether your friend's insinuation is likely to be well founded. I think you can scarcely believe it probable

that I should have taken the risk of opening on the slight chance of a one-card draw. However, I have myself learned at some cost the unwisdom of playing poker with strangers, and shall feel much more comfortable to withdraw from the game and leave you to fill my place with some one better known to you.'"

"How perfectly abominable!" exclaimed Lina. "I've always hated Fred Sloane, anyway. He's such a busybody. Remember the story he started about Milly Hunter?"

"No; what?"

"Down at Tuxedo. Some one wrote him from town that the Hunter family were in a terrible way because Willy had run off with Max Elting. He read it Milly, and as Max senior had been playing tame cat to her for some time, he never stopped to wonder, but just passed the news on, and before the children were found, poor Milly's reputation was a thing of shreds and patches. May I play, partner?"

Ten Eyck assented.

"What happened then?" I asked, going back to the original theme. "I hope you men insisted on his going on with the game."

"'Twasn't any good," said Ned. "We did our best, but he was as firm as a rock. Perfectly courteous and all that, but immovable. We all felt pretty small, I can tell you, and after he left the smoking-room, tried to make Sloane apologize."

"He wouldn't?"

"No. He's a stubborn mule, you know. Stupid and stubborn, an impossible combination. In the face of the manifest absurdity of the thing, he swore the fellow did open that pot on the chance of making good on a one-card draw. Oh, a fellow like that makes me tired."

The hand was finished, and the

cards were being shuffled for a new deal. I turned to Mamie Van Stettin.

"Mamie," said I, "take my hand a few moments, like a good girl, will you? I really am a bit seedy and shall have to get a breath of air, I guess. No. If any of you move, I simply shall stay here and fight it out. All I want is a mouthful of fresh air, and I'll be back again directly. If I don't come, don't worry, though. I shall just have turned in. My maid's on deck in my steamer chair. She'll look after me. *A bientôt.*"

The tiny red light still glowed in the bows, as, alone and unaccompanied, I made the tour of the deck. I had sent Julie for a smart Paquin steamer wrap of black cloth lined with shirred silver - and - blue chiffon, that Mamie had got at a reduced - model price, and with that slipped on over my evening gown felt perfectly comfortable and assured.

The wind had kicked up just enough sea to make a misstep a perfectly comprehensible matter. As I rounded the curve of the main saloon the second time, Oceanus allied himself with my projects to the extent of favoring the ship with a sudden lurch, which quite accounted for the slide with which I brought up alongside my interesting stranger, and made excusable my clutch upon his arm.

I must say for him that he was a man ready in emergencies. I never felt a prompter or more reassuring

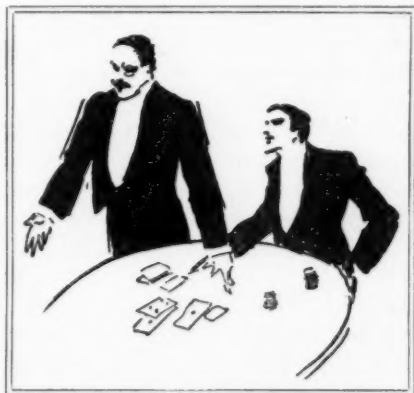
embrace. Not that it was offered as an embrace, however, or conveyed any suggestion of undue familiarity. By no means. It was simply the natural impulse of a chivalrous masculine nature toward a fragile woman in distress.

"Oh, I beg your pardon," I cried, in a much distressed voice, not free, however, from a suggestion of the humorous appreciation of the situation. "The wind has freshened, hasn't it? It was stifling inside. I felt that I must—but the ship's so unsteady!"

"If you will allow me," he suggested, offering his arm with grave courtesy.

But I didn't quite like to go that length.

"Thanks, so much," I replied, "but I think I'll just stand here for a bit. It's so hard to promenade in a dinner-gown."



"It is you with whom I am playing."

Lina came into the stateroom while I was undressing at a somewhat later hour, and opened her eyes with surprise.

"Why, for Heaven's sake!" she exclaimed. "I supposed you were in bed ages ago! You didn't come back."

"No," said I, contemplating my charms in the little mirror before which I was standing, "I simply couldn't. I was absorbing ozone on deck. Don't I look fresh?" Really, I felt tempted to kiss my own image in the glass, my eyes were so brown and liquid, my skin was so pink and dewey.

"You do indeed," replied Lina, with the first sarcastic emphasis she

had ever used toward me, "as fresh as paint."

I turned to her with a good-humored smile.

"Now that would have been awfully clever, if you'd said it to Mamie Van Stettin," I said, "but you're like one of the Spanish gunners in the late war. Your zeal is earnest but misdirected. I don't even massage, you know."

Lina colored. Those little creases between her brows have been a considerable tax on her pin-money.

"You've been on deck with that man," she said. "I really don't think it at all nice, Gwladwys. You know nothing about him."

"Don't I? Now, that shows how mistaken one may be as to one's own acquirements. I fancied I had gained a good deal of information in the last hour or so."

"Hour or so!" snapped back Lina. "It's a good two hours at least since you left us."

"Is it really?" I exclaimed. "Dear me, how one loses account of time when pleasantly occupied!" Then I leaned forward and took Lina's pretty face between my palms. "Come, old girl," I said, "we're not going to row it, even a little bit, you and I. You're in a vicious temper, you know. How much did it cost you?"

She kicked her French heels on the floor and pouted silently a moment; then relaxed into a good grumble.

"Oh, it's a beast of a game, anyway," she said, "and Billy played like a perfect duffer. He might just as well have put his hand into my pocket and stolen a hundred dollars, as to have robbed me like that. Look here, Gwladwys, I'm shy twenty dollars of the amount I lost, and would like to settle the first thing in the morning. Can you let

me have it until I can draw on Papa?"

"Of course. Have it in gold?"

"Yes, please. I'm paying in English money. What's the matter?"

"I don't know where I put my purse."

"That gold affair with brilliants?"

"Yes, I got it at the Van der Gilt's cotillion, last winter."

"I noticed it on your chain while we were playing."

"Yes, I put it on for bridge. I don't remember taking it off." I paused in my vain search, checked by a suggestive look in Lina's eyes.

"What do you mean?" I asked, with considerably asperity.

"Oh, not at all, my dear—not at all. Only coincidences always interest me."

"He's a perfect gentleman," I maintained stoutly, "and you said, yourself, that Fred Sloane was an idiot. Besides, the clasp on that chain has been bothering me for a long time. I shall send the steward on deck to search, and if he doesn't find it, the purser shall advertise it to-morrow."

"Was there much in it?"

"Full of sovereigns. I don't know how many. All the money I had outside my credit."

"Too bad! I'm awfully sorry. Here's the steward. Look here, dear, a moment." She lowered her voice. "If you have any consideration for your new friend, I wouldn't allude to the fact that you lost your purse while absorbing ozone in his society. People might be ill-natured enough to remark that really in the end it is cheaper to employ a *masseuse* than to pay such a price for looking fresh."

I recovered my purse, but not its contents. This is what happened.



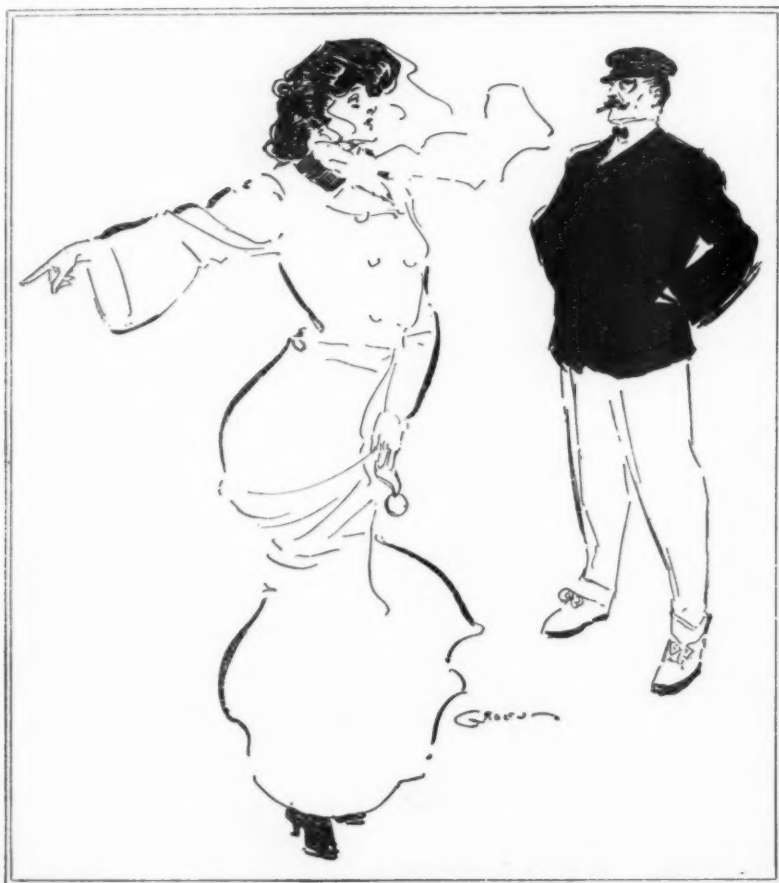
"I felt perfectly comfortable and assured."

On the night before we docked I happened to be sitting quite by myself on deck when my chance acquaintance, of whom I had seen more or less at intervals during the voyage and toward whom I had felt a growing attraction, approached and asked if he might take the chair beside me for awhile.

"I have something to say to you," he began, seating himself as I assented, "and this may be my only chance. First, I wish to put a question to you. Have you come to feel

any kindly disposition toward me during our short acquaintanceship—Gwladwys?"

I glanced up quickly as, for the first time, he used my name. The expression of his face, the look in his eyes made me suddenly experience a shrinking from him. His countenance, his appearance seemed wholly to have changed, to have become desperate, eager, purposeful, impatient of further circumlocution. And yet he appeared to feel distrustful of his address, like one who ad-



“‘You are a brute,’ I said, ‘an absolute brute.’”

vances a project for which he feels the hour not quite ripe. I drew myself further within the shelter of my chair, and answered him with unmistakable coldness.

“I cannot say that I am conscious of any special increase of kindness toward you, Mr. DeFries,” I returned, in my most snubbing manner; “certainly not enough to induce me to excuse you for your presumption in using my Christian name.”

He leaned a little closer, and laid his hand on the arm of my chair.

“You do not know who I am,” he said, and his manner seemed almost to threaten me, arousing my com-

bativeness, for I am no coward to be intimidated by any man.

“Nor,” said I, making a movement to rise, and looking him straight between the eyes with a superb air of indifference, “does it interest me in the least to learn. Pray spare me the information.”

One does not rise from a steamer chair easily or with dignity. I did not feel my attitude as impressive as I could have wished it to be. Nor, evidently, did he. As with difficulty I succeeded in gaining my feet, he placed himself before me, quietly but with such determination that I could not evade him without

drawing attention upon ourselves.

"That," said he, with an ugly look making vicious his regard of me, "I decline to do. It is time that you learned who I am, and in what straits."

As I confronted him, a horrible intuition laid hold of me.

"You are—you are not——" I gasped, my failing breath refusing to utter my miserable suspicion.

He smiled cruelly back at me.

"I am," he said. "I am Herbert Martin, your father, and I am dead broke. It is up to you either to raise a loan for me on your credit or to let your friends there"—with a motion of his head toward the saloon where the others were at bridge—"discover our relationship. I've got an obligation to meet before I leave this ship, and I look to you, my daughter, to assist me."

A sudden thought came to me. An obligation! That meant a card debt. I recalled what I had heard of his association with cards. I dropped my voice and put a question to him.

"Is it possible," I asked, "can it be true that Fred Sloane was right in his accusation of you the other day?"

His lips curved beneath his moustache.

"On-lookers are proverbially said to see most of the game," he remarked.

"And my purse?" I gasped.

"You shall not lose the trinket," he said, and thrust his fingers into his vest pocket.

"I made a snatch at the empty bauble as he drew it forth. Not a thing of mine, however slight, should remain in his possession. Then I drew myself up and faced him calmly and with absolute confidence.

"You are a brute," I said, "an absolute brute. And I am no coward to be made the victim of a black-mailer. Leave me now, this instant, and never dare to address me again either by speech or letter, or I will show you up in your true colors. That you are my father will have no more influence with me than if you were a stranger, while the fact that it is your daughter who is driven to exposing you may be far more detrimental to you than any lesser testimony. Now go, before I send for Colonel Drayle."

And so it was that the information withheld by my mother I gleaned at first hand. And if there is a proverb to which I have learned to subscribe with all my heart, it is that which sets forth the bliss of ignorance. My father evidently holds to that which sets forth the wisdom of discretion, for he has never crossed my horizon since. I am much troubled at intervals by reflecting upon my relations toward the Fifth Commandment. If longevity is alone assured by a strict obedience to it, then were it well for me to be setting my house in order, for I don't see how I am to come at a fulfillment of its injunction.





Bartlett's Expense Account



BY PAUL R. WRIGHT

"A great, big, red-headed kid"—that was what he called himself. He recognized that a certain guileless, heedless strain in his nature had caused him to retain much of his boyishness long after he should have outgrown it along with his knickerbockers. He was a hap-hazard, thoughtless young man despite his large height and breadth of frame, and the weary months in which he had knocked about Chicago as a reporter.

In addition, owing to a strange perversion of the western local dialect, "Kid" was what she called him when she felt playful as well as affectionate. So that Bartlett was no more ashamed to be called that than he was of his red hair and general bigness, although at times he felt that he was sorely handicapped.

Then he would stare weakly at his great strong hands which in a preceding generation would have been more potent to win fortune and the girl he wanted. And sometimes the unwelcome idea would force itself home that he had made a mistake. He never would be an overwhelming success as a "pencil-pusher." He was made for the frontier, and not for the local room.

One of those dreary times was now. Sunday, being his day off, was very full of vacancy, according to Bartlett, and he had more time than he wished in which to think. The more he indulged in this diverting occupation the worse had become his frame of mind, until in desperation, he had thrown on his overcoat and walked the two miles from his

lonely room down to the office for what relief there might be in the exertion. Moreover, there was his expense account which should have been made out and passed in the night before.

It was very early in the evening. Dimly from over the two partitions came the quiet voice of the city editor. The copy readers who were to hold the little den between had not yet put in appearance for the night.

The reporters' room looked like a deserted telegraph office, with its big, heavy tables divided into sections by glass partitions. In place of the telegraph instruments were business-like typewriters. Everywhere were the day's papers and broken pads of copy paper. There was no attempt at luxury about the place—nothing but hard-seated chairs and an omnipresent but unwritten law to keep busy or to keep out.

The stillness was almost unbroken save for the rapid click of two typewriters and the rattle of paper. Some of the men were taking the day off and some were at dinner, so that the quarters were nearly empty. Bartlett, alone of the regular men, was in evidence, and the two machines were being worked by godless space-fillers who had no regard for the day.

Bartlett looked up at the clock. The hands were pointing close to six, and he knew that unless his account were ready in a hurry, the city editor would be gone, and it would be too late to draw any cash on it for another week. The city

editor managed these things for the reporters.

Using the inevitable copy paper, Bartlett put down his items: car fare, cab, telephone, incidentals. It all amounted to but \$1.50.

"Not enough to pay my washing bill," he grunted.

"Now, where's an envelope?"

He fished a bunch of keys from his pocket and unlocked his drawer. Inside was a wild *pot-pourri* of newspaper clippings, city guides, account books and again bescribbled copy paper. The envelope proved hard to find. He pawed over the stuff impatiently, saying things that were more or less appropriate, but the envelopes, safely hidden at the extreme end of the receptacle, eluded his efforts.

Suddenly he stopped. A little gray envelope, not what he had been searching for, arrested his attention. The lines of worry about his eyes and mouth relaxed as a puzzled look stole over his face.

"How in the name of all—how did this get here? Mighty poor place for love-letters, this is."

He drew forth the closely-written sheets with his great, red fingers, and the expense account was forgot-

ten. The click of the typewriters died in his ears, and the clang of the fire-alarm gong on the wall that told of some burning factory in a distant ward found no entrance at all. He raised the letter part way to his lips and then suddenly checked himself,

and his mouth stretched in a grin at his own absurdity. He looked up to see if he had been observed. He had not. The godless space men were absorbed in stretching their paragraphs.

"She writes a mighty fine hand, when she tries." It was excellent chirography, too—firm and rather long, with just enough of the fashionable scrawl to it to be suggestive of a world of pink teas and other matters of which the reporter was uselessly ignorant, and just round and unformed enough to betray the school girl.

The reporter read slowly. It was not new to him. He had done the same thing numerous times before, until the undotted i's and the haughtily disregarded punctuation were as familiar to him as his own address. More than once he had tried to answer it, but had temporarily given it up as a bad job, skipping it in the correspondence



"The unwelcome idea that he had made a mistake."

that had followed. Not for very long of course, but for several days, hoping that something would turn up.

It struck him now, however, that there were things in it which he had not previously noticed. The unintentionally vivid picture of high doings there on "Quality Hill" in Denver, of the brilliant officers and bright uniforms and of society life in general—all these things were old. But there was something else in the letter to-night, which Bartlett found it hard to analyze.

"I reckon her old man has played out at last. I might have known his game couldn't last forever. He was kind to her while it did. I rather guess they have got onto him good and plenty now, although she tries to make me think it is all right.

"She doesn't complain. She isn't one of your tearful kind. Never saw her cry but once. But I'll bet she would have been glad to use my shoulder a good many times these last few weeks, if it hadn't been a thousand miles away.

"Wish I could write something that would cheer her up. If I could only say that 'the old man' here had seen the error of his ways and is finally convinced that I am worth a grown man's pay, and that it would be at that figure beginning with last Monday—I rather guess that would make her big little heart jump and she would squeal a bit and squeeze the baby sister, especially when she read that I would come for her next month.

"Can't do it, though. Have to tell the sober truth. Might as well do it now."

He glanced at the clock. It was half past six, and the city editor had long since gone. There was no need for hurry now. Bartlett found some respectable office paper in the

drawer and he wrote. When he came to what he had designated as the sober truth, this is what he inscribed:

"Said raise of salary (amount not specified) has been promised me at the first favorable opportunity. I need not ask you to be patient, for you are that already. . . . I am doing my best."

"Hello, Bartlett," interrupted a voice over his shoulder, "What's the matter now? I thought you had Sundays off."

"Oh, it's you, Hedke? Yes, you're right, I'm not on duty to-day. Just making out my expense account."

Hedke coughed.

"Oh, yes, I see, expense account. You use rather long explanations, seems to me. Trying to make the management pay for your wine suppers, I suppose. Have you been to dinner yet? No? Then you can go out with me. I hate to eat alone. I've got a story to write after I get back, so get a move on you."

Bartlett reached in his desk again for the envelopes. He found them this time and directed them, one to the city editor and the other to the girl in Denver. Then he raked together the pages of his letter and the sheet of expense account and stuck them in the envelopes. Hedke kept hurrying him. The one to the girl in Denver he stamped, but he did not seal either. Then he jumped to his feet and hurried to the city editor's desk. That gentleman had gone. Bartlett dropped the envelope through the letter slot beneath the roller top.

By seven o'clock he was again alone and on the street. Hedke had gone back to his "story" in the office. He wandered aimlessly for a while, through the theater crowds

and the church crowds, buffeted by the wind and chilled as well by the friendlessness of it all. After half an hour or so of this the reporter found himself with his back to the whirling lake breeze, crossing the Madison Street bridge toward the mighty region of the West Side.

The river beneath him was rushing resistlessly southward from the

against ragged men who wore no overcoats, and caught odors that came reeking out from "pup" restaurants and chop-houses. This was the "land of graft," the neighborhood of the old riots, of drunkenness and of similar unpleasant features.

Miles of this sort of thing stretched away into the distance, where the gleam of the street lamps was lost in



"A land of drinking places and cheap hotels."

Lake toward the Mississippi and the Gulf. In daylight it had been clear and blue, but to-night it was dark and savage, showing beneath the arc lights the swirling cakes of ice it carried on its cold bosom. Bartlett hurried on.

Across the bridge, and he found himself in a land of drinking places and cheap hotels. He brushed up

the blur, past shooting galleries where electric bells pounded continuously on windows, and stores where penny slot machines displayed seductive pictures to the artistic instinct of the West Side. "Square meals" in this section went at ten cents, and rooms could be had from that amount up to the aristocratic fifty.

The noise of rag-time music played on a bad piano reached him. Free high-class vaudeville was advertised. Bartlett realized what the place would be, but Bartlett was "sore." There was an ordinary bar in front, but from beyond the low partition with swinging doors came the piano music and the stamping of shoes in the buck-and-wing dance. Now and again a voice bawled: "Draw two!" And the bartender, who seemed to understand, turned to his faucet.

Bartlett pushed open these inside swinging doors. At the farther end was the stage. The artists stretched across it in a semi-circle, a man grotesquely costumed at each end, and all the rest, with one exception, were women. What caught Bartlett's eye was a diminutive child, whose legs were much too short to reach the floor, but whose tiny hands clapped in glad unison with the music and the heavy tramping of the dancers' shoes.

He found a table and sat alone, ordering beer and a cigar from the waiter with the plastered hair. Bartlett let the beverage stand in front of him, and threw the cigar into a dark corner. Then he drew from his pocket one he knew to be clean, and lit up.

The performance was not interesting. The girls could not dance, that was plain. And the jokes were very antique, to say the best. The little girl climbed down from her chair and did a shuffle, and did it enthusiastically. Also she sang, using the full force of her lungs in the effort. Now and then a round of half-hearted applause broke from the mixed groups at the tables. Bartlett found it pitiful, and refused to be appeased. Still he sat there, hoping that the next act would be more interesting than its predecessors. It was possible that something would

be done sufficiently cruder or sufficiently better to rouse him. Meanwhile he let the beer get stale.

Then he began to wonder if "the old man" ever would raise his pay. "The old man" was kind looking. He had a gray beard like a patriarch, and a fatherly manner of address. Surely the trouble was not there. It must lie with the business end. He pondered the meaning of that convenient phrase, "first favorable opportunity." What should it consist of? When and how would it come? Whom did it depend on? Dividends to the owners? Or were they waiting for him to distinguish himself and to prove his worth?

He was oblivious to environment. He drew forth her letter from his pocket and read it again. Then he pulled out the missive he had addressed to her. It was stamped properly and the writing on the envelope was legible and correct, but the inside felt strangely thin, although he had written many pages.

He lifted back the flap and pulled out the contents. One sheet of copy paper—his expense account!

Then, as the blood rushed to his head and surged in his ears, he realized that he had given the other, the love letter, to the city editor.

He jammed on his hat and found his way blindly to the street.

It was one o'clock, and all West Adams street was sleeping. That is, not exactly all, but nearly all. Up in the rear room of a certain third floor Bartlett was just falling away into slumber. Falling, however, hardly expresses the situation, because Bartlett was having a deal of trouble in chasing the riot of fancies from his brain. Against a back-ground of West Madison Street scenery, free vaudevilles and diminutive child dancers, there stood out in

his wearied brain a most persistent picture of love-letters gone astray, of treacherous expense accounts, and the gaping mouth of that letter slot in the city editor's desk.

Suddenly this medley left him and he found himself sitting up in bed, listening intensely to something that had roused him. Then it came again. It was a shriek, high-pitched and wild, and it broke out upon the still night with a strange horror.

Bartlett sprang from his bed. He threw up the window opening toward Madison Street and gazed out. The big, distant stars looked down upon the sleeping city, impassively. Far in the north was the wavering flare of a steel mill. From the direction of Congress Street came the murmur of an "L" train. All was quiet, save that the echoes of that scream still rang upon his ears.

Then it came again. Lights appeared in the rear windows across the alley. Bartlett shuddered and drew in his head. As he did so two pistol shots rang out, in quick succession.

He had not dreamed, then. His brain began to work quickly. Visions of the ubiquitous hold-up man flashed through his mind, and of beauty in distress, and deeds of valor. Last and greatest of all—a scoop! The favorable opportunity! This was what he had hoped and prayed for.

He slammed down the window and felt for a match. He found one in the hall, struck it and began to clothe himself. The boarder in the next room asked what the trouble was, and Bartlett's answer was "a scoop."

He fell into his street garments without removing his pajamas, hunted up his revolver in the dresser drawer and made for out-of-doors. Adams and Loomis Street and no hold-up and no signs of one. A block north and he came upon a group. A very large policeman was surrounded by three men of smaller dimensions in plain clothes.

"What was the murder? Where was the trouble? Who was held up? Who has been shot? Who did the shooting? Did you get the man?"

The officer looked at him. "What're you givin' us? There ain't been no murder. Nobody was held up. There's a case in the case and there wasn't any trouble anyway. If you want to know about it you can go up to the next corner. There are some officers up there."

Bartlett hurried on. At Madison Street, sure enough, there were three officers, two civilians and a woman. The officers observed his approach, and went away without leaving

so much as a precinct number to identify them. The woman disappeared from the street. Before he had time to think the whole group had dissolved into the heavy night air of the West Side, and he was talking to a boy who ran the sandwich wagon at the corner. He was as badly mystified as ever.

It was now too late for the first, but the second edition had not yet gone to press. It might be possible to get the information and the scoop at the police station. It was some blocks away, and Bartlett ran. At the station a nice-looking young man with a short cropped moustache



"What're you givin' us?"

answered his query. He knew nothing whatever of the matter, and called the sergeant. The latter emerged from an inner room in his shirt sleeves and blinked at the light.

"Hold-up?" said he. "There ain't been any hold-up that I know

is a crazy reporter up here now inquiring about it."

The sergeant's sides were shaking, but Bartlett was not sure whether from laughter or not. He continued to the telephone, "Well, you've waked up the ward and you'll have to make some sort of a report. Better come up and explain."

He turned to the reporter and announced that "there hadn't been no hold-up nor no murder. It was a cat. Groves, he missed it."

Bartlett's jaw fell. It looked as if the sergeant were telling the truth, which he really was. The sergeant saw the look and comprehended.

"Cheer up," said he, and slapped a big ham of a fist down on Bartlett's shoulder.

On the road to the Lake Street "L" station Bartlett collected himself. Before he took his seat he was able to laugh. It was really mighty funny, after all. And besides, there was a good story in it, but he would have to make time if it was to see print the next morning. He found

some stray sheets of copy paper somewhere in his clothes, and wrote as the train ran down toward the "Loop."

It was about two o'clock when he turned in his story. He knew it was a good story, an unusually good



"A thing of wonder to the city editor."

of. Tell us what you know about it "

The reporter told and the sergeant said it was all very funny, but this was the first he had known of the matter. Just then the telephone bell rang and the sergeant answered.

"Oh, it's you, Groves? Yes, there

story, a "peach." But he realized, too, that it was very late. He left the office and turned toward home guessing that he had slipped up. It was a good guess. Not a word appeared the next morning to crown his labors. He learned from an Italian saloon keeper that the police had been wondering if any of the papers had it in print.

Bartlett's expense account was a thing of wonder to the city editor. He did not know what to make of it, which was natural. This was the first time that a scrub reporter, a rank picture-chaser, had ever had the impertinence to address him as "dearest," and the city editor had had a long experience with that hungry tribe.

Wherefore he scowled until the light began to dawn upon him. Then he coughed and grinned and chewed his scraggly moustache and stroked the bald crown of his head. Then he "tumbled" to the situation.

Of course it was a mean thing to do, and he knew it. But nevertheless he gathered those precious sheets together and hastened down the hall to the managing editor's office. The latter read and laughed.

He looked at what there was of a signature, and compared it with something on a note that had been left on his desk by the night city editor. It related to a story that hadn't seen print, but had attracted

the favorable attention of the nocturnal boss for some reason.

"Is he any good?" the managing editor asked.

"Oh, he'll do, I guess."

It was twelve o'clock when Bartlett awoke on the following morning. After his fruitless pursuit of the hold-up the night before he had lain unsleeping for many a weary hour. It was daylight when at last he dozed off to uneasy dreams, and it was very late when he arrived at the office.

Bartlett had hoped to get upon the scene before the city editor, and to rescue his precious letter before that functionary should have time to open it. To this day he does not know the difference.

The city editor was moderately wise, else how came he in his exalted position? When Bartlett appeared on the field he was busy, and to Bartlett's "I guess I have made a mistake, Mr. Sheridan," he merely looked puzzled.

"About my expense account."

Mr. Sheridan raised his eyebrows. "I don't understand."

Then Bartlett saw the envelope, and snatched it up. It had never been sealed.

"This is it," he hastened to say; "a mistake in the figures, that is all." And he retreated.

But that evening his pay envelope was more bulky, and the telegram he sent to the girl in Denver said:

"It's come."





The Ginger Man

*Being two letters and sundries
from Judith Wilkinson,
in California to
Richard Wanby at Union Club, Manhattan.*

BY LUCIA CHAMBERLAIN

Hotel Yo Semite, May 15, 1903.
My dear Dick:

Are you the man who scorned me, when, alluding to my anticipated journey West, I made use of the venerable adjectives "wild" and "woolly"? Didn't you tell me that the nuclei of a western town were a block of cement sidewalk and a trolley car—and the danger of being "held up" in California was equal to the danger of being struck by lightning on Long Island?

I shall not dispute the lightning theory, since I am the exception that proves it. It may seem a prodigal dispensation of fortune that I, who am neither an adventurer nor a drummer, nor an author in search of "local color," but merely a spinster of some discernment and a limited Manhattan experience, should fall into such a splendid adventure! Splendid is the word for it. Now you will complain that I always begin in the middle, but you know, Dick, that is my only way of stimulating your curiosity.

Of course the proper beginning was the Monday after Kitty's wedding. I have allowed myself only one month's absence—that means two weeks in California—and Uncle Shafter was determined I should get what he called "my money's worth." They gave me Saturday and Sunday in which to recover from the surplus of sentiment and champagne a wedding always leaves in its wake.

Monday morning we were off for Yo Semite.

The plan was for uncle and me to spend two days in the valley, and get the Los Angeles "Owl" train the afternoon of the third, for Santa Barbara, where aunt would join us. There we would whirl from Catalina to Los Angeles and Riverside, see a few missions, fly north again to do a dinner, a dance and a tea or two. Thence I should be hurled aboard the night east-bound, and *adios* California, which I shall have scarcely seen!

I know it is wicked, Dick. I hear you decry the method. But I am a born plebeian. I like sight-seeing when there is something to see, and no Baedeker. And it is to be confessed that the idea of riding on a stage—not the forlorn express wagon that plies between the Kaatskill House and Kaatskill Junction, but a real, four-horse stage, that goes, with seats on top, and a driver in boots and a slouch hat, titillated my adventurous spirit. When I confided my enthusiasms to Uncle Shafter, he dashed their joy by saying that a three-seat "spring wagon"—whatever that is—was the modern stage employed on the Truckee line, but that he believed "Slip Knot Jim's" old double-decker was still extant, and he would inquire. This he did, to the extent of a letter and two telegrams to Truckee.

It accords entirely with your idea of the effete West, though not at all

with my hopes, that we did not mount the hurricane deck of "Slip Knot Jim's" ship of state in the court of the Palace Hotel. No; we rode modestly to Truckee in a chair car, uncle and I. But there the effete stopped, and the woolly began.

Dick, you should have seen that stage! Without doubt it was the double-decker of "Slip Knot Jim"! It was worth a three-hour wait, and an execrable luncheon. The driver, not a day over twenty-five, slim and shy-eyed, and brown as a nut, appeared surprised, not to say a little dismayed, when I asked him to help me up. There were four passengers besides us—all men—and these proceeded to get inside. Uncle Shafter refused my invitation to join us, on top. He said, for dust, the Truckee quality was fine, but he preferred his straight. Then, the driver hauling from above and uncle boosting from below, I arrived at the top seat. Climbing the Matterhorn does not compare with that experience; and, once arrived, the sensation of falling off on the horses in front was terrible.

We got under way, beginning at a gentle trot that set the harness jingling, and the horses' heads, 'way below, went bobbing up and down, fretting at their curbs. They were wild to run, and just as I was about to tell the driver that I wasn't afraid to go faster, he turned to me, flushing up through his tan, shy as a girl ought to be:

"We're late, miss," he said, "I'm afraid we'll have to hit her up a little."

"Why, of course," I said, "hit her up. I'd love it."

"Well, hold on," he said, and he straightened out his leg and rammed the brake down hard—we were going down hill—hunched up his shoul-

ders, sent his whip snaking out to the leader's ears, gave a yell, the like of which I never hope to hear again, and we "hit her up"! The stage nearly jumped out from under me!

You know, Dick, one of my articles of religion is, "When on top of a tally-ho, hang on to your hat." But I discovered it was to myself, not my hat, that I should hang now, if I ever wished to greet Manhattan again. So I hung! And in time, growing accustomed to the motion, I began to feel the exhilaration one does on a yacht, under full canvas. You never could imagine such a blue sky, it is truly turquoise; nor such tremendous, ragged pine trees. The space here, earth and sky, is fairly terrible; and the dust, red and all-pervading! I blessed the care of Aunt Shafter that provided the enveloping linen "duster." I asked the reticent driver, was it always like this? He said no. In winter there was mud. Some folks preferred that. I said I thought I should. It would be harder to get on. "Yes," he said, "but it's harder to get off."

Then I asked him if his name were "Slip Knot Jim." He laughed for the first time, and told me "No." His name was Harry Hyde. "Slip Knot Jim," he explained, was shot by road agents in sixty.

"Were you ever held up by road agents?" I asked. We were on what the driver called the "up grade," the horses wading through preternaturally deep dust. The road was a cut between banks perhaps four or five feet high, grown over close with scrubby bushes—manzanita, they call them—and I shall never hear a whipple-tree creak again without tasting that dust, feeling that hot sun beating on my back, and seeing, well, this!

Before the driver could open his mouth to answer me, something that was neither a bird nor a man, jumped up out of the scrub on the right bank and flapped down into the road. I felt the same chilly horror creep down my spine that attended my childhood's discovery of a "Kuklux" in the pages of "A Fool's Errand." Some one said "Stop!" The driver leaned forward and yelled to the leaders.

"Throw up your hands! I'll fire!" We were each looking down the barrel of a revolver. Harry Hyde dropped the reins and shot his hands up, palms out. It all happened while you could draw a breath. "Don't shoot," he shouted; "there's a lady here!"

The voice in the road did not shout, but it had the carrying quality of a bullet. An instant later appeared at the hub of the wheel a man in a bag, with a gun in each hand, and awful eye-holes! The moment I saw those eye-holes, I knew what had happened to us. You've no idea, Dicky, of the appalling effect of a bag worn over the head, and flapping about the knees! I think I can quote his words, they were so very business-like and succinct. "Sit there, you fool," he said, and as he looked at Harry Hyde I suppose the remark was not for me, though I must have looked the part. "Sit there, and if you stir one foot, I'll blow your brains out!" He walked up to the stage door. One of the men was just getting out to see what was wrong, and he stepped into the muzzles of the two revolvers which the gentleman in the bag was presenting at cock. He was dreadfully taken aback, poor man! I was glad it wasn't Uncle Shafter, as it must have been a severe nervous shock. By leaning forward a little, I could

see everything that went on.

Of course you will say, Dick, that my part should have been to snatch up the reins as the driver dropped them, yell to the horses, trample the bag-man in the dust, and with pistol shots ringing in my ears bring my precious freight in safety to the valley—the girl heroine of the Sierras! Now in the first place, I can't drive, and in the second place, I was too much interested by what was going on. I am a born experimentalist, and I had a feeling that the opportunity of hanging over the hurricane deck of a Sierra-going stage, to watch my uncle and four other prosperous-looking gentlemen surrender their pocket-books to a man whom they didn't know if they had ever seen before, might not be offered twice.

For fear you may some time be held up, Dicky, I will now instruct you in the proper deportment.

The gentleman in the bag took up his stand in front of the door, and each man, as he emerged, spread out his hands level with his ears, palms out, in an attitude of automatic horror. Then he of the bag told them off in a line, and they stood, all hands up, while he went through their hip pockets—for weapons, I suppose—and unearthed one small revolver.

All this time Harry Hyde was sitting, looking straight ahead, with his hands still in the air. He must have been very tired. I thought of offering to "spell" him, but the bag-man had threatened to shoot him if he moved, and besides, if I did, it would be harder to see what went on.

"Gentlemen," said the bag-man—he was very polite—"Gentlemen will please throw their money down on the ground at the spot I indicate with my foot." I could not help



"A man in a bag, with a gun in each hand."

thinking of the games we used to play at kindergarten. Most of the men went through all their pockets, but when Uncle Shafter's turn came he only took out the thirty-five he had in his coat pocket. I knew he had eighty in an inside one. I wanted to shout "Cheat," but the bag-man didn't ask him to look

further. I suppose he thought the haul was big enough. It did look a great deal when it was all together in a stack.

Then Uncle Shafter—I wish aunt *could* have seen him with his hands up—said to the bag-gentleman, "I am taking a young lady up to the valley, and as I know it is not your

intention to make ladies uncomfortable, I hope you will allow me enough money to get her back to San Francisco."

He looked up at the driver's seat with a very steady stare through the slits in the bag. I felt he was looking at me, now, and perhaps I would have to shoot up my hands the next minute, and give up my watch, and my thirty-five cents. But he looked down again without saying anything, and pushed a five-dollar gold piece toward Uncle Shafter with his toe. And Uncle Shafter pocketed it!

Then the bag-man looked over at the bushy bank opposite, and raised two fingers. Another man, with a dirty piece of white cloth across his eyes, came out of the scrub, and picked up the money. Then the bag-man, revolvers still at cock, addressed the first class in finance.

"Get back into that stage," he ordered. They got. I never saw Uncle Shafter obey so quickly in my life! Then he looked up at the driver's seat again, and I tried to see the color of his eyes. He spoke to Harry Hyde.

"Now pick up your lines and drive, and if you look back once, you'll get a bullet in your skull. Good-bye!"

He did not tell me not to look back, and as I knew he would not mistake me for the driver, I did. He was standing in the middle of the road, just where we left him. He did not seem in a bit of a hurry to go. When I turned, he raised his hand, two fingers up, as he had before, and then he was lost in the dust.

After we reached the hotel that night, and had told, singly and in chorus, what we would have done if we had had a gun, and every one had impressed on me what a risk I had run of being shot, and how

scared I should have been—the bag was the only thing that frightened me—a squad of cavalry came into the station, and the captain betook himself to the hotel bar, whence the news spread. It seems our polite friend in the gunny sack is a very desperate character. And now the reason he was not in a hurry was made plain. There was a stage with Wells Fargo's box on it, half an hour behind us, and an express wagon a few minutes behind that, and our friend waited for them, held up and lifted the goods of each in turn, and departed, three minutes before the cavalry appeared. They found the Wells Fargo messenger and the express wagon driver tied to adjacent trees. I like that, Dicky—that broad, sweeping style of work. It's impressionistic.

The captain says they scoured the mountains in the vicinity all the afternoon, but so far, no trace. I like that, too! If you intend going, go! His methods were thorough. I shouldn't mind meeting him again when no one will lose money by it.

To-day is the day after the great event, and I have stood upon "Inspiration Point," and wept at the sight to uncle's disgust; and it is after dinner. Still the veranda and the bar discuss our adventure as though "Inspiration Point" and "Mirror Lake" were not, and the man in the bag is captured fifty times an hour. As aunt will be sure to read a wild account in the papers, uncle has telegraphed, and I have written to Santa Barbara. That despatched, I thought "I must tell Dick; now or never, while I am boiling over with it!" I have boiled to the extent of twenty pages, just to show you the truth of what I always said when you tried to account for me—that I am a grand exception to every rule!

Having vindicated myself, I subside. If you hear from me again, it will be because I have had another adventure! I have persuaded uncle to go to Santa Barbara by steamer, as I am hopeful of being stopped on the high seas by the black flag, and overhauled by pirates.

Uncle is gloomy, and refuses to fall in with this plan with any animation. He says, regretfully, he might as well have let aunt have that thirty dollars for her orphans' guild. I suggested that the bag-man might have orphans of his own some day, but uncle doesn't believe it, and hints at satanic origin.

Now, my dear Dick, this is not a letter, you know I never write them. It is a chronicle; and the only thing I really wanted to know, your last scrawl carefully avoided. Who is she, Dick? You know you'll have to own up when I get back, so take the opportunity to hide your blushes behind a written confession to your not-to-be-shaken chum,

Judith Wilkinson.

P. S. I append this notice which a waiter stole from the bar for me. It seems to refer to my late friend of the bag.

"Wanted. Jack Kinsie, alias 'Two Finger Jack,' age thirty years, height five feet nine inches. Blue eyes, brown hair, smooth shaved, well spoken. \$1500, alive or dead.

Henry Hall,

Sheriff, El Dorado Co.

* * * * *

San Francisco, May 24.

Dear Dicky:

You know I promised I would not write again unless I had another adventure. It has come to pass. I have been the belle of a ball!

It was not my doing, but they have a way of booming one here. You have heard of California booms, haven't you? Of course the "hold-

up" story excited a good deal of interest. As you said, it is not a usual thing in California for a young woman to be "held up." But hold-ups aside, California hospitality is no myth. From the attitude of meekly wondering why all this undue trouble for one so humble, I have reached the conclusion that the Atlantic seaboard—including Richard Hanby—never properly appreciated me. Whatever makes you imagine San Francisco a city of lotus eaters? It is the most energetic place I ever saw, and, as usual, the women head the social procession. Their attitude that you are *the* thing and all other things on the side must be the opposite of fact, but somehow they do gracefully convey this impression.

At Aunt Shafter's tea I met a most charming woman, a Mrs. Jaffry, who is a good illustration of this singular society. She is red-haired and white. Imagine, if you can a "Henner girl," without sentiment, looking smart. Only five years my senior, Dick, and a professional chaperon. But she is a power behind the throne, and the "Great Khan" of the smartest cotillion club here!

This astonishing person was delightful enough to offer me a luncheon on sight, and that not as it were a duty, nor yet as I were her long-lost sister, but as if it were a good idea that had just entered her head.

'Twas here that I met three entirely enchanting, newly-fledged matrons, and three young persons in their second and third seasons—precocious children of twenty-two and three. And here it was that the all-powerful Mrs. Jaffry suggested my appearance at the Friday cotillion. This, of course, was on the side, after luncheon. I raised

several objections, age being one, for she is a frank creature, and elicits a similar candor from others.

"You!" she said. "No woman who wears a smart gown is near the dead line!"

Wasn't that sweet of her, Dick? I look all of my twenty-nine years among these women of wonderful complexions. But the Jaffry insisted, and one of the recent matrons joined us, and added her vote. So I remembered my amber chiffon, and, stiffening my courage with the comforting thought that no one here could recall me in a short frock, I sailed in, with the above adventure.

Of course my head is turned. No young chicken of twenty-nine—remember, Dick, every woman is twenty-nine until her thirtieth birthday—could withstand such an evening. It was brought about by the open-minded attitude of these people, anxious to be pleased with anything new and curious that comes along, and the consummate generalship of the omnipresent Mrs. Jaffry. That woman is a wonder! How a creature without the suggestion of a past can be so fascinating is a mystery.

It was the last cotillion of the season, and a tremendous crush. Dick, can you imagine the ecstasy of meeting, in a chunk, a whole two dozen delightful men whom you have never seen, most of whom you have never heard of before? They are not a bit like our dancing men, all turned out of the same mould. Some were artists; some were sporting men; two were millionaires, and one was the night editor of a newspaper. I was to dance the cotillion with an elegant infant who rejoiced in the name Cassilly, and an inexhaustible fund of anecdote.

While we were working a confi-

dence game for a place next the first set, Mrs. Jaffry arrived with yet another man. "Here," she said, "is an affinity who has been striving to meet you all the evening, but as he has to lead the cotillion, he has been seized and led aside by some one at each psychic moment."

My affinity laughed, and said it was a hurry call for him to lead, and every one was instructing him. Under cover of his shaking hands with Mr. Cassilly, and asking him how "Pretty Maid" came out, I managed to inquire of the Jaffry, "Who is this, you presume to call my affinity?"

"Oh, he's spindrift," she mumbled. "He's an escaped horse-thief, or a younger son, or an Australian king incog. I can't make him out; try your luck!" She carried off the Cassilly, "for just a moment," she assured him, leaving my affinity and me *tête-à-tête* while the musicians were tuning. His name was Flint, and it fitted him. He stood while he talked, and his figure gave the effect of being hewn out of stone. He appeared a few inches under six feet; broad shoulders, wide forehead, narrow jaw, deep-set grayish-blue eyes, that made odd light spots in a very brown face. He kept squeezing them up, contracting them while he talked, like an artist trying to get the ensemble of his model. His voice was low, but the hardest, clearest cut I have ever heard. He told me he had prospected in South Africa, gone broke, come to California in a freight schooner, and made a little money in oil in San Bernadino county, and would I dance two breaks with him? By the time I had said "yes," up comes the Cassilly, and my affinity takes his whistle, and goes up to chair one.

By the time I had a collection of

slippers and bird cages, and fans, and California violets hung across my corsage, he turned up for his first break. He danced well, and while we were whirling round, he asked the same old questions that intelligent men have insisted on making conversation with, I suppose

is unlucky to tell a story more than fifteen times. Then he blew his whistle, and I subsided into my chair, and he was off to pave the way for a new figure.

Mrs. Jaffry leaned over the back of my chair to ask me what I thought of him.



““Did you like it?” he said.”

since Adam asked Eve what she thought of his garden.

I told him I liked California very much.

Had I seen the valley? California is full of valleys, Dick, but when people say “*the valley*” they mean Yo Semite. I said I had, but did not mention the hold-up, because it

“Oh, the man who would be king,” I said. She laughed, eyes, mouth and shoulders. “You’re wise,” she said, and blew away on some one’s arm. Then the orchestra began another two-step, and the “man who would be king” came rushing from the other end of the room.

"No, no," I heard him say in his odd, clear-cut voice, "a waltz."

He raised two fingers. The musicians stopped. I jumped, Dick! It brought to mind such another place and picture. I must have stared disgracefully, and he turned and caught me in the middle of it. For an instant he stood like a bronze, looking at me. His light eyes were all squeezed up, till they looked like points of steel. Then he smiled, and the violins swept into the "Valse Bleu."

He waltzed divinely, but though we danced two more breaks, he did not speak again until the end of the last waltz, which he stole from Cas-silly. With its expiring note, he looked at me again, pinned me with his eyes, as it were. It was like looking down the muzzle of a revolver.

"Did you like it?" he said.

"The waltz?" I said. "It was beautiful!"

He laughed and gave me his arm across the floor.

"My dear lady," Mrs. Jaffry told me in the dressing-room, "such attentions from the sparkless Flint are unheard of! I shall certainly see that the 'man who would be king' sits next to you at the Pendenning's dinner."

But, oh, grief, Dicky! That night

was the end of it! The enclosed clipping tells the sad story. Did you ever hear of such indecent haste? He might have waited over one train, and had the privilege of traveling as far as Denver with a spinster warranted not to run. He was very interesting, Dick, one of the two most interesting things in my woolly experiences. If you want to interest me now, Dick, you must either put your head in a bag, or go east one train ahead of me. If you do both, you will be irresistible!

If all is well and I do not fall into a train robbery on the way home, you may have the privilege of meeting me at the Grand Central one week from to-day, and escorting me to the Newport boat, as Mamma hates to come up to town in summer.

Until then I am your California-nized chum,

Judith Wilkinson.

Cutting from the society column of the San Francisco *Chronicle*:

"Mr. H. Garret Flint has been suddenly called East in the interests of the San Bernadino Oil Company, of which he is a stockholder. His absence will be regretted by many matrons and maidens, as he was to be one of the leading lights in the festivities at Monterey. The date of his return is uncertain."





Quarantined by Request

BY UNA HUDSON



It was a large and imposing chair of the "stationery rocker" variety, with skirts of a mottled blue and brown stuff falling to the floor and concealing its huge, claw-like feet.

One day I observed that it had been pulled out of its usual position in the corner and placed in the middle of our little parlor. It did not look well and was very much in the way, but Roberta considers it her prerogative to arrange the furniture to her liking, so I said nothing till, in attempting to cross the room in the dark and my bare feet, my toes and the feet of that beast of a chair got into a mix-up with results that can be better imagined than described. Then I said a variety of things, most of them unprintable, and I ended with a demand that that chair be instantly and immediately relegated to its former place against the wall.

Roberta looked troubled.

"I don't like it in the middle of the floor any better than you do," she said, "but I am afraid it is out of the question to put it where it belongs. You see, there's a hole, a *big* hole, in the carpet, and that chair is the only piece of furniture big enough to cover it."

A hole in the parlor carpet! This was indeed serious, for my income is a very modest one, and a new carpet, while not exactly unattainable, is still difficult of acquisition.

"Um—what will a new one cost?" I asked.

My assumed air of the bloated bondholder did not impose upon Roberta in the least.

"Oh, I know very well we can't

have a new one," she said quickly. "And that is why I put the chair over the hole and said nothing about it. But we could have the carpet and new curtains, too, if it were not for Christmas."

"Christmas?"

"Now, don't pretend that you don't understand what I mean. You very well know that if we didn't have to give presents to our uncles and aunts and cousins and sisters and all our other friends and relatives, a little thing like a hole in the carpet wouldn't trouble us at all. Why, Christmas keeps us poor all the year."

"But, Roberta——"

"There's no 'but' about it. You know quite as well as I do that there's no earthly sense in giving a lot of people things that they don't want and can't use, but we go on doing it year after year just because we haven't the courage to break away from a custom that is all right in theory, but has become a horrid nuisance in practice."

"Well," I suggested, "why don't you pioneer the innovation?"

"I tried to last year," confessed Roberta. "I began with Barbara."

This was interesting. Barbara is my sister, and the spirit of Christmas giving—and taking—is unusually rampant in her breast.

"Well?" I demanded breathlessly.

Roberta laughed. "It was rich, and funny, oh, very."

That Roberta is generally able to extract some amusement from her intercourse with Barbara goes far to disprove the oft-repeated assertion that women are lacking in a sense of

humor. Though, on the other hand, Roberta may be the exception that proves the rule.

"I suggested to her," Roberta went on, "that we all chip in and have a big dinner together, and afterwards a tree for the children, with just nuts and candy and little things that don't cost anything to speak of. We'd have lots of holly and mistletoe and music, oh, a general good time, you know. And there were to be no presents; I put particular stress on the absence of presents. And Barbara——"

Roberta shook with unholy laughter.

"Yes?" I said in joyful anticipation. "Go on."

"Barbara said of course if we were too poor, or didn't *want* to give them anything, why, we needn't. But, for her part, she considered the giving of presents at Christmas a beautiful, almost a *sacred* custom; she always had given Christmas gifts and she always expected to; she was very far from begrudging any little self-denial that might be necessary to procure remembrances for her friends. Well, I lost my nerve——"

"No wonder," I murmured sympathetically. "I've been up against Barbara myself."

"And I gave her some horrid little trinkets for her toilet table, not because I imagined she'd fancy them, but because I was desperate, and simply didn't know what on earth to give her. And she gave me——"

"Roberta," I warned, "'a gift horse'——"

"Should not be looked in the mouth," finished Roberta promptly.

"But for this once," she went on recklessly, "I'm going to prop his mouth wide open and count his teeth. As I started to say, Barbara

gave me a hatpin with a huge purple head and I wore it all winter with my red hat because I really didn't feel that I could afford a new hat, and if I hadn't worn it—well, you know Barbara. And she gave you six neckties, and you've been wearing them for the same reason that I wore the hatpin, and——"

"Roberta," I interrupted earnestly, "I'm with you in *any* scheme that will deliver me from Barbara's neckties."

"Well, you're not the only sufferer," Roberta consoled me. "She buys them by the gross and distributes them among all her male relatives, her husband included."

"And they look," said I, referring to the ties, "as if they had come out of a third-class pawn shop. And do you remember the presentation speech that invariably goes with them? 'It's so hard to choose for a man, but I am sure ties are *always* nice and they're useful, too.' And we take the monstrosities and wear 'em because we haven't the courage to throw them away."

"That's just it," sighed Roberta, "if we didn't have to *use* the things they give us, it wouldn't be quite so awful. Now, there's that sofa pillow mama gave us; it's beautiful in itself but it makes my other pillows look *so* cheap. And the dishes they've loaded up on us! When we sit down to dinner our table looks like the bargain counter of a crockery store."

"It's all true," I assented gloomily, "but what are you going to do about it? What can you do about it?"

"I'll tell you what I'm going to do," Roberta said with spirit. "This year I shall neither give nor receive presents, and we'll buy the new carpet."

"But, my dear," I said helplessly,

"last year you tried to induce Barbara——"

"I know it," sighed Roberta, "I spoke to them all, and my people turned me down harder than yours did. But this year I shall resort to subterfuge."

"Subterfuge?"

"Now, if Tommy were to come down with scarlet fever two or three weeks before Christmas——" began Roberta tentatively.

"Roberta," I said sternly, "do you mean to say that you intend to expose that poor, innocent child to a horrible disease just because you don't want to accept a few pickle forks and plates and sofa pillows?"

"They'll be more than a few," Roberta said with conviction. "As for the scarlet fever—you goose, do you suppose I intend that Tommy shall actually have it? We'll just pretend."

"You seem to forget," I demurred, "a certain outward and visible sign——"

"Not at all," interrupted Roberta. "You know a man, don't you, in the Health Department, if that's what you call it, that Mr. Bronson, or Johnson—what is his name?"

"Bronson."

"Well, get him to give you one of those scarlet fever cards, and we'll put it up outside, and there won't a soul dare to come near us."

If I hesitated it was for only the very smallest fraction of a minute. "Roberta," I cried, "you are a wonder; I'll do it."

Roberta beamed, but the next moment the smile froze on her lips.

"Uncle Peter!" she gasped. "I had forgotten Uncle Peter!"

Now Uncle Peter is my uncle, and in the matter of Christmas observances he outdoes even Barbara. He has a big country place that is a perfect palace of delight, and there he

lives summer and winter, year in and year out, with the single exception of Christmas week. The holidays he spends with his nieces and nephews, each in turn.

Uncle Peter is blessed with an abundance, indeed I might say a superabundance, of worldly goods. I do not consider myself more mercenary than the ordinary man, but when, in the natural course of events, Uncle Peter dies, his wealth must of necessity become the property of another, and why should not I be that other?

Barbara, as I have reason to know, holds views in no way dissimilar to my own, and I might, I think, say the same for each and every one of Uncle Peter's relations. Wherefore it naturally follows that we lay ourselves out to please the old gentleman, and are considerate to a degree of his likes and dislikes, his fads and fancies.

I thought of Uncle Peter's wrath if he ever found us out; I thought of the ties Barbara would be sure to bestow upon me, of the muffler that would come from Amy—I have a baker's dozen already—of the things that Roberta's relatives as well as my own would be sure to give me, and I made up my mind.

"Roberta," I said, "of two evils, the lesser always. We'll have to risk Uncle Peter. Fortunately, it's Barbara's turn to have him."

"Oh, you dear," Roberta exclaimed jubilantly. "What color shall the new carpet be?"

The next evening I brought home the sign. The letters were big and red and staring and could be read a block off. Roberta and I put it up under cover of the darkness, and went in and giggled and caught each other's hands after the manner of children bent on a piece of mischief. Then we talked carpet and curtains

till bedtime and afterwards fell asleep to dream of the time when the baneful Christmas gift should be a thing of the past.

Next morning I telephoned the news of our affliction, or rather Tommy's, where it would do the most good, and thereafter our friends and relatives, like the Pharisee and the Levite, "went by on the other side." It remained for us to notify Uncle Peter, and this we did by means of a tactfully worded letter from Roberta.

The answer came when we least expected it, and was of the nature of a boomerang. It was heralded by a sharp ringing of the doorbell. Roberta hastily dropped the blue ribbons with which she had been tying back the new curtains, and seizing Tommy, who flat on his stomach had been peacefully contemplating the pattern of the new carpet, dragged him unceremoniously into the dining-room.

I opened the door and found myself face to face with Uncle Peter. Roberta declares I groaned aloud, that she heard me in the dining-room. This, I insist, is incorrect. However, I am quite willing to admit that Uncle Peter was the last person on earth I wanted to see just then.

"Well, well, Howard," he said stepping into the hall, and putting down a bulky valise, "you didn't expect me, now did you?"

I could truthfully say that I did not.

"Fact is," continued Uncle Peter, divesting himself of his overcoat, "I've come to spend Christmas with you instead of Barbara. It's mighty unfortunate the little chap should get sick just at this time; liable to be a pretty dull Christmas for you. How is the boy?"

My mind was in a chaotic condition and I struggled vainly for an appropriate answer.

"He's very well," I stammered. "That is, you know, he's no better. He—ah—he's sick, you know."

Uncle Peter looked slightly surprised.

"Scarlet fever, I think Roberta wrote?" he ventured.

"Yes, scarlet fever; contagious, very dangerous, especially to adults. You—er—you've had it, Uncle Peter?"

"Bless me," said Uncle Peter, "I don't know. S'pose my mother attended to that when I was an infant. Anyway she should have."

"But," I said, "if you haven't had it—"

"Now, don't you worry about me, nephew. It's my plain duty to keep Christmas with you. Here I am, and here I intend to remain."

That settled it.

"I—I'll just go and tell Roberta," I said weakly, feeling that the burden was too much for me to bear alone.

Roberta was putting Tommy to bed.

"Has he come to *stay*?" she whispered turning toward me a dismayed face.

"He's come to spend Christmas," I said dejectedly, and I slumped down on the foot of Tommy's bed.

Then Roberta rose to the occasion in a way that challenged my deepest admiration.

"Tommy," she said, "what do you want most in all the world?"

"A veloc'pede an' a *lot* of candy an'—"

"But what do you want *most*?"

Tommy considered for the space of a minute.

"Long pants," he announced with an air of finality.

A vision of six-year-old Tommy in

long pants rose before me and I stifled a laugh that would have hurt his feelings and annoyed his mother.

"Then, Tommy, you shall have them——"

Tommy gurgled with joy unspeakable.

"If," Roberta went on relentlessly, "you will stay in bed all the time Uncle Peter is here and pretend that you're sick."

"Roberta," I interposed, "think of the child's morals."

"And think of Uncle Peter's rage," Roberta retorted.

I thought. "All right," I decided. "Go ahead; fix it up with Tommy."

Roberta turned swiftly to her offspring.

"Long pants and the velocipede and all the candy you can eat when Uncle Peter's gone," she promised recklessly. "And while you're in bed, mince pie every night for dinner and waffles and maple syrup every morning for breakfast."

Tommy's eyes bulged. "Mince pie every night," he mumbled blissfully, "every single night?"

"Yes, and you must stay in bed and tell Uncle Peter you've got scarlet fever."

"Stay'n bed; tell Uncle Peter got scarlet fever," Tommy repeated parrot-like, and Roberta nodded satisfied.

"He was mother's good boy," she said approvingly, and went down to Uncle Peter.

I watched her in speechless admiration.

"Dear Uncle Peter," she murmured bestowing a kiss on his weather-beaten countenance, "this is *good* of you. I whispered to Tommy that you were here and he wants you to come in and see him the very first thing in the morning."

But somehow, on one pretext or another, Roberta managed to delay

the meeting between Tommy and his uncle until late afternoon. And as she herself remained in the room and directed the conversation no awkward disclosures were made.

It was at dinner that night that our real misery began.

"Isn't it strange," suddenly said Uncle Peter apropos of nothing at all, "that Tommy's face is not at all red? I thought that, in scarlet fever——"

"Oh," interrupted Roberta smoothly, "Tommy's rash is entirely on his body. Won't you have another croquette, Uncle Peter? I remember that you used to be fond of them."

Uncle Peter accepted the croquette. But if Roberta thought he was to be diverted by any such cheap device she was doomed to disappointment.

"Who is your doctor?" was his next question.

Roberta sent me an imploring glance.

"Our doctor," I said mendaciously, "is out of town just now."

"But what doctor is attending Tommy?"

"Why—er—you see," I stammered, "we haven't called in one yet."

Uncle Peter's brows went up alarmingly.

"He hasn't been so *very* sick," Roberta put in hastily. "I've doctored him myself—hot applications and soothing drinks and—and all that sort of thing, you know."

"Yes," I said, trying to help Roberta out, "nice, harmless home remedies, you know."

"I know," said Uncle Peter dryly.

"But really, you should have a doctor. Now, as your doctor is out of town, what do you say to calling in Dr. Ellston? He's a personal friend

of mine and remarkably successful with children."

"It's good of you to suggest it," Roberta never forgets her manners, "but, really, Uncle Peter, we—we couldn't think of troubling him."

Uncle Peter stared. "'Troubling him," he repeated. "Why, my dear Roberta, that's his business."

"I know—I know, but a—a perfect stranger like that. Really, Uncle Peter I—I don't see how we can."

"I'll tell you what we'll do," I said, seeing that matters bade fair to reach a crisis, "I've got to go out this evening, promised to meet a man, and I'll just ask Bronson to look in on the little chap. Bronson knows a lot."

"Good doctor, eh?" This from Uncle Peter.

"Isn't a better doctor in the city," I assured him enthusiastically. "Why, I remember one of his cases, a man with—with——"

"Appendicitis," prompted Roberta helpfully.

"Yes, appendicitis. Bronson cut out the—the——"

Uncle Peter silenced me with a wave of his hand. "Spare me the details," he begged. "Such cases are apt to be harrowing in the extreme." Which was considerate of Uncle Peter, for my imagination might have given out and stranded me goodness knows where.

At first Bronson refused flatly when I told him what I wanted him to do.

"Now, see here," he protested indignantly, "just because I gave you that sign is no reason why I should go and mix myself up in the affair. I'm not a doctor; I don't even look like one. Why, man alive, I can't write a prescription."

"We'll soon fix that," I said, and pulled him into the nearest drug

store where I induced the clerk to let us look at his file of prescriptions.

"Now look here," I said, seizing the top one, "this is a short one and it looks easy. Study this till you can reproduce it with your eyes shut."

Then Bronson yielded. At the end of fifteen minutes he was able to write the prescription, and I pushed him onto the car with a fervent, "Thanks, old man; you're the best friend I've got."

"Don't be too sure of that," he called back. "Goodness only knows what sort of a disease this prescription was intended for."

I am indebted to Roberta for a description of what took place when our doctor, *pro tem.*, reached the house.

Unfortunately Uncle Peter insisted upon being present at the interview between doctor and patient, and he asked so many questions and made so many suggestions that the doctor, hopelessly confused, wrote his prescription and fled incontinently.

Then Uncle Peter, spite of Roberta's protests, must needs go out to get the prescription filled. He came back bringing a bottle of dark liquid that smelt abominably and tasted worse than it smelt.

"Now, Roberta," said the kindly old gentleman beaming at both Tommy and his mother over the top of his gold-rimmed spectacles, "we'll see how the little chap takes his medicine."

He took out a silver dollar and held it enticingly before Tommy.

"Now, my boy," he said, "this is yours, if you take the medicine without making a face."

Tommy looked doubtfully at the bottle. "A dollar," he said, "won't do me any good when I'm an angel."

Evidently Tommy was much more keenly alive to the risks of the situation than was Uncle Peter.

Then Roberta with rare presence of mind seized the bottle.

"One teaspoonful in water immediately after meals," she read. "I think," she said sweetly to Uncle Peter, "that Tommy needn't take it to-night."

But worse befell us on the morrow. This was the visit of a man bearing an official notice from the Board of Health to the effect that all scarlet fever patients must within twenty-four hours be transferred to the pest-house.

Roberta dissolved in tears, and when I came home we conferred behind closed doors.

"We'll make Uncle Peter our enemy for life, of course," Roberta wept, "but I simply *cannot* let Tommy be taken to the pest-house."

"Certainly not," I agreed. "They'd find us out before he'd been there five minutes."

Roberta glared through her tears. "That wasn't what I had in mind," she snapped.

"Certainly it wasn't," I said with a hasty kiss. "You were thinking of the little chap's comfort and happiness."

Roberta graciously accepted my intended apology, and together we sought out Uncle Peter with intent to "'fess up."

That gentleman heard us through

in silence. When we had finished, a sly twinkle showed in his eye, a twinkle that, had he been six instead of sixty, I would swear meant mischief.

"Well," he said, "since confessions are in order, I may as well admit that that man never even came within shouting distance of the Health Department in his life. It was I who bribed him to come here."

"You?" we chorused.

"You see, I rather suspected that Tommy was no more sick than I am myself, and I wanted to make sure. By the way, Roberta, I neglected to give you my real reason for coming here to spend Christmas. I wanted, for once in my life, to be where a Christmas present couldn't get at me if it tried."

This from Uncle Peter! I gazed speechless, but Roberta flung both arms about the old gentleman's neck and gave him a resounding kiss.

"You're a perfect dear!" she cried ecstatically.

"Roberta," Uncle Peter made answer, "I'll make you a sharer in the one dark secret of my life. I've got two of the handsomest crazy quilts you ever saw, and my house-keeper made 'em for me out of the neckties and mufflers that have been given me for Christmas."

Roberta shrieked with laughter.

"Fact," asserted Uncle Peter solemnly. "I'll show 'em to you when you come up to spend next summer with me."

Corporal Casey's Little Joke

BY DAVID H. TALMADGE

"He could fight," said Bill Johnson, smiting the top of a cracker barrel in Baldwin's grocery with a gnarled fist by way of emphasis, "he could fight like a demon, could Corporal C., but he fought I fear for the love of the thing, far more than for the big P—meaning principle, dear friends. Still, I'm not at all sure.

"I've seen the Corporal," continued Bill, "by the side of a dying comrade, and I've seen him in the boxing ring, and I've seen him on the battlefield, but I've never seen him when his emotions were precisely understandable to the ordinary intellect. For instance, the night Murphy died of what the doctor called acute something or other, induced by eating too many onions, the Corporal stood by his side, looking solemn as the wail of a turtle dove. He and Murphy had been boys together and had come into the war together. We expected him to show something like heartfelt grief."

"And didn't he?" asked Ike.

"I don't know. I couldn't tell whether that was what it was or not. He reached sort of blindly for Murphy's hand, and heaved a big sigh. Then he said, his voice trembling: 'The battle's not always to the shwift, me b'y—manin' bullets; sometoimes 'tis to the shtrong—manin' onions. Yez lave us, Murph, wid a shwate incinse in our noshtrils, and our oyes floodin' wid tears at the mim'ry av the day whin yez wor shtill aloive and hungry.'

"I thought I'd laugh when he said it, and then I thought I wouldn't. I haven't laughed at it yet, and it happened near to forty years ago.

Maybe I will some day when I can make up my mind whether 'twas funny or not."

"Too much for me," said Ike Briggs solemnly.

Dud Taler wagged his head.

"And then the time he went against that New Yorker—remember? Had him groggy as a top, all but walloped, prime for a knockout, and then laid down. Why? That's what I asked him, and he said: 'The picture av a gir-rl dropped from the felly's bilt just whin Oi wor riddy to deliver the uppercut, and the soight av thot innocint face made me c'lapse wid shame, for Oi had no shirt on.'

"Was that it, or did the New York chap get the better of him? I don't know."

"Mighty hard to tell," said Ike.

"Queer," grunted Dudley.

"And then I've seen him in the charge, and he was a cyclone. And I've seen him in camp when the boys were moping, and I've heard him tell lies about men who'd gone out from their homes to fight for their country, and had returned in one short year to find their sweethearts buried, until every Jimmy in the regiment was aching to wring his red neck. And then I've heard him sing melancholy songs until the air turned to a navy blue, and the more tender-hearted fellows were sniveling in their sleeves. And I've heard him talk back to a superior officer—once only, only once, and he apologized for it afterwards, saying it was only a joke, and the apology was accepted."

"Tell us about it, Bill." Ike

directed an eloquent glance at Dud, who nodded eagerly.

"It was before you fellows got to the front that it happened; before we'd learned how to fight. There was a neat little scrimmage one day on the very edge of a hill village in Virginia. The other fellows worked their rifles like sin, and things were real warm. 'But our brave boys yelled as the bullets knelled, and forward pressed their way'—until all of a sudden they changed their minds and concluded to get in somewhere. A man's a sort of a chump who doesn't know enough to go in when it rains bullets, and there were mighty few chumps in our regiment at that particular time, dear friends."

"'Ear, 'ear!' cried Ike. "The gallant private's a slatherin' of 'is hown harmy with soft soap!"

"Shut up, Ike," growled Dud. "Ain't you ever going to get old enough to know that your English comedy business ain't funny?"

"Maybe you know and maybe you don't," Bill went on, "that the Corporal and Lieutenant Burling came from the same town. The Lieutenant had been a cashier in a bank, I believe, and the Corporal had been a coachman. Many a time, so the Corporal told me once, had he drove about the town with the Lieutenant and a girl in the carriage behind him. And many a time did he see things which if he'd have told 'em would have thrown society thereabouts into a fit.

"'She wor a foine gir-rl,' the Corporal said, 'wid a face thot wor shwate as the shmell av bacon on a cold mornin'. She wor a true leddy, wid all av the leddyloike virtues and wid none av the leddyloike faults.' He loved her himself, he said, with all the fervency of one who didn't dare tell her so. 'Twas often he prayed by the side of his little white

bed at night that some man might speak disrespectfully of her so that he might smash him for love's sweet sake. I think he meant it. He told me of a time when he was near to death with a fever, and the girl went to his room over the stable and nursed him with her own white hands. She saved his life, he thought. He said he was more grateful to her than he could tell, and that 'twas a great temptation he



"He could fight like a demon."

resisted when he didn't die looking up into her eyes."

"He must have been in earnest," said Ike, looking long and tenderly at his watch, which bore the portrait of a sour-faced woman upon its crystal.

"I don't know, my boy. I couldn't fathom him. He was one instance of deep water that was noisy. I have thought that the girl loved him. Stranger things have happened. He

was a fine-looking lad. On that day when we had our first taste of battle—ah, but you missed a treat by not being there!—he gave us a model to pattern after, skipping through the changes of the fight as joyously as if it had been a barn floor dance and every rifle a fiddle. And when the order came to get into the trenches he was one of those who didn't obey.

"'What yez be troyin' to do,' said he to the Lieutenant, who was in command of the company that day, and who was standing bolt upright, 'is to get all the fun out av this game for yoursilf, yez silfish man yez!'

"Then the Lieutenant ordered him again to lie down, but the Corporal remained standing.

"'Oi'll be dommed,' said he, 'if Oi'll do anything av the koinde.' And he stuck out his lower lip, pulling down the upper one like a bulldog, and lit his pipe square in the face of the Lieutenant and the Confederate army. For a long time then, maybe a minute, they stood there glaring at each other. The Lieutenant was angry, for it was a clear case of insubordination. But it was a bit out of the ordinary, and he was as new to warfare as the Corporal was, and he failed to do what he should have done. After awhile the Corporal shifted his gaze to the branches of the tree above the Lieutenant's head, but he didn't relax his perpendicular. And all the time death was spit, spit, spitting at them, and us fellows in the trench were betting our shirts that they'd both be killed before 'twas over with."

Bill filled his pipe from Baldwin's box, and lighted it, watching the blue smoke as if he were trying to find within it the solution of a problem.

"I never fully understood it. The Corporal said afterwards he saw it

coming in the tree. Maybe he did, but I've always had my doubts. At any rate—and this I do know, for I saw it with my own eyes—he jumped at the Lieutenant all of a sudden, and every mother's son of us like to have got heart failure at the sight. It had every appearance of being an attack. The Lieutenant was so surprised he was taken at a disadvantage, and the Corporal's arms were around him, and they were swaying back and forth, struggling, before the rest of us caught up our heartbeats again. Of course it didn't last long. The Corporal was dragged off to the rear under arrest, and that was the end of the act."

"But not of the play?" asked Ike.

"No, the play went on. We fell back in the evening, giving place to a seasoned regiment, and shortly after supper the Corporal was ordered before the Colonel. Things were lively then, and the old man took things as they came, postponing nothing. I marched the Corporal in, and stood beside him through it all. The Colonel looked at him pretty hard.

"'Casey,' said he, 'what have you to say for yourself?'

"'Not much, sor,' said the Corporal. The words came from between set teeth, and his eyes twinkled like prairie lights. 'Give me what Oi deserve as soon as yez can do it, thot's all,' said he. And at that minute the Lieutenant entered the tent. There was a worried look on his face. He glanced nervous like, first at the old man, then at the Corporal.

"The Corporal smiled and spoke to him. 'Oi've a shmall meminto av the day for yez,' he said. 'Tis a bullet thot wor mint for yez by the longlegged rooshter thot foired it. 'Tis somewhere abouts in the shmall av me back. Oi saw 'twor goin' to

come whin Oi wor watchin' the branches above your hid. Oi saw thot one av thim fellies had yez shpotted. He wor too hoigh up at firsh. Oi counts six wid me heart. He wor lower down. Oi counts six again. The next toime Oi counts

hands extended, and the old man stood up with a look of dumfound- edness on his face, the laugh died to a gasp, and the Corporal went down flat and stiff. When he was taken to the hospital I carried one end of the stretcher. The Lieutenant



"She nursed him with her own white hands."

only four—and jumps. Oi've the bullet all roight, and no one's knowed it at all till now. 'Tis a gr-reat joke!"

"Then he laughed and laughed. And all the time his grip was tightening on my arm, and just as the Lieutenant started forward with his

walked alongside, carrying the Corporal's hand.

"Just as we laid him down, the Corporal opened his eyes and smiled.

"'She be the foiné gir-rl, sor,' he whispered; 'twould have kilt her entoirely if—if—'

"'God bless you, Casey,' said the



"Lit his pipe square in the face of the lieutenant."

Lieutenant. He tried to say more, but the words wouldn't come, and he went away crying."

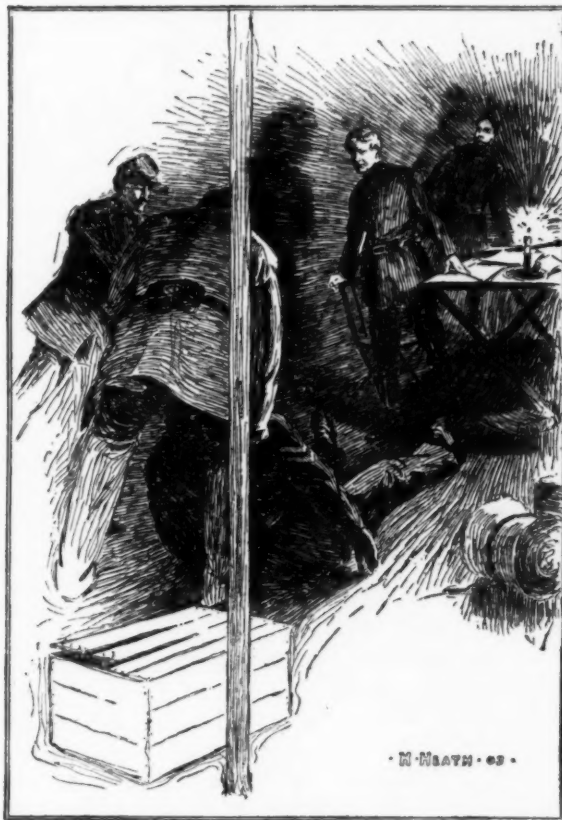
Bill puffed at the pipe, contemplating the listeners from half-closed eyes.

"I never knew what to think of it," he went on, after an interval. "The tree story was a little thin. It didn't stand to reason altogether. And in the racket that was on when it happened, I couldn't exactly tell—but, dear friends, I stayed by the Corporal a while after the Lieutenant had gone, and listened to his mumbling. "Twor a dir-ty tr-rick av

yez, sor,' he said, 'to shoot me loike thot. Oi worn't goin' to hurt yez. Oi wor only troyin' to take care av yez—for her sake.' That was all I heard. On the day the Corporal was discharged fit for duty, the doctor told me, in answer to an innocent question I asked him, that the bullet had struck him in front.

"Peculiar case," commented Ike.

"I don't see that it is," said Dud. "The Corporal took the only means he could think of to get the Lieutenant out of danger. He intended to knock him down and roll him under cover, that's all."



"The corporal went down, flat and stiff."

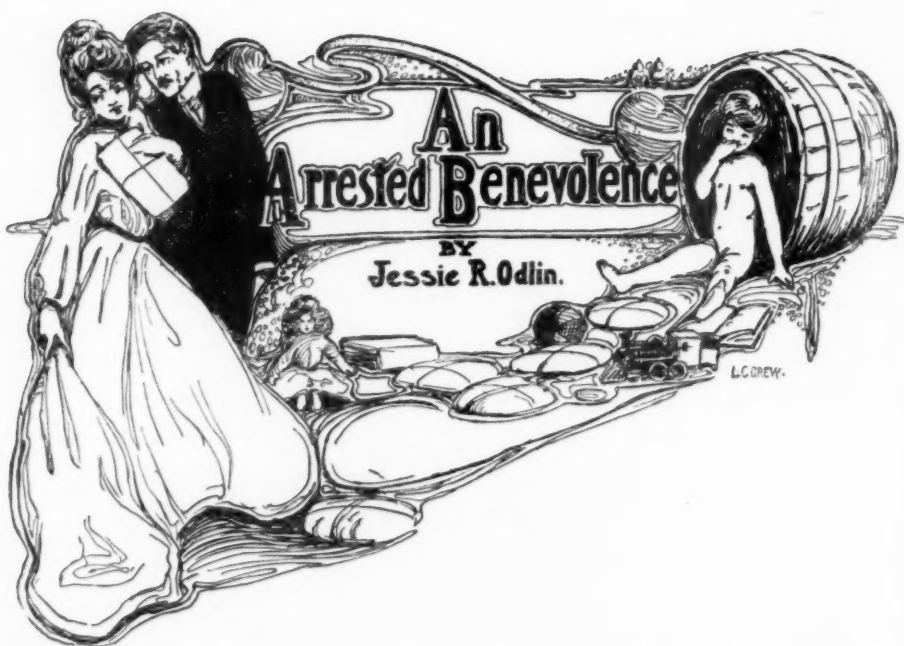
"Fiddlesticks!" snorted Ike. "He simply lost his temper."

"Then why did he spring his little joke, as he called it?" asked Dud.

"Because he wanted to save himself," returned Ike. "Eh, Bill?"

"Well, I don't know," replied Bill slowly. "It may be he lied in order that the Lieutenant might return unstained to the girl. I wouldn't be

a bit surprised if that was about the size of it. He was a noble chap, without meaning to be. But it ain't really worth figuring on now, considering that the Lieutenant died two years after the war, and that the Corporal—he told me so himself, and I've been saving it for the right sort of an audience to spring it on—married the widow.



This is not to be the story of a lover's quarrel, for from that day to this I have never been able to find out what the quarrel between Elizabeth and the professor was about. Therefore, it is just with the outcome of the quarrel that my narrative is concerned.

To begin with, Elizabeth was our kindergartner at Glendale, and she seemed quite the incarnation of the kindergarten ideal—not only mentally but physically. She was such a beautiful outward expression of inward grace, tall, slender, fair and blue-eyed, with the sweetest voice and quite the gentlest manner imaginable. The professor also was an incarnation—of a different sort. He was dark, gray and courteous—one would have known, just to look at him, that he was a professor of the dead languages or of ancient philosophy.

I knew that he and Elizabeth used to have very profound discussions; yes, and prolonged ones, too, for besides the numerous opportunities they had for verbal discourse, they

carried on quite an active correspondence. I used to ask Elizabeth whether he wrote to her in Latin, Sanskrit or Hebrew. "It would be all Greek to you, Marcia, you hopeless old maid," she would laughingly answer, placing the latest epistle with its predecessors in a little inlaid box we had long since dubbed the Holy of Holies.

But at last even these erudite and devoted people quarreled. And Elizabeth was miserable!

To the rest of us it was quite unbearable, to see the spiritless way in which she carried on the little evening tasks—the folding of papers, the sharpening of pencils, the untangling of yarns, which had always been such a pleasure to us, calling forth, as they did, little explanations of the whys and wherefores, the symbolism, the moral principle or the spiritual truth underlying each bit of manual labor. And the scraps of child biography, the amusing incidents of daily happenings, seemed to keep us all in touch with the very spirit of child life.

But alas, after the quarrel all was changed. Though Elizabeth made pitiful efforts at cheerfulness, she couldn't keep it up. And so the glad Christmas season promised to be shorn of its accustomed brightness.

As I said before, I never knew what caused the quarrel, but I felt that it was indeed fearful and final when I saw Elizabeth deliberately open the Holy of Holies, make a

to have her confide in me, but all my overtures met with no reward until, yes, it was Friday morning, and the following Monday would be Christmas.

The bit of confidence was not in regard to the quarrel, but the letters.

"I sent them all back, Olive took them, so I am sure he received them. I sent him a note and my ring," with a very perceptible quiver, "and asked him to return my letters, and



"Elizabeth was our kindergartner."

neat parcel of its contents, and address them in bold characters to the professor.

Olive, the professor's little niece, who was devoted not only to him, but to Elizabeth, had long been the proud bearer of notes and letters, and to her Elizabeth entrusted the package, knowing how promptly and safely it would be delivered.

Elizabeth's spirits did not rally, and her depression seemed to pervade the entire household. I longed

he hasn't done so. What would you do?"

"Send for him and ask him to explain." I considered that a wild venture in diplomacy. If she could just see him, if they could talk it over, I felt sure they would make it up.

"No, I will never send for him," said Elizabeth with great determination.

"Well, go to the bazaar with me to-night. He is sure to be there,

you are sure to meet, and you can ask him (coldly, of course) why he has not returned your letters. Nobody will be the wiser, nobody knows about the late unpleasantness."

Elizabeth finally consented. The bazaar was to be quite a social event, and I insisted upon superintending Elizabeth's toilet. I made her wear the softest, daintiest and laciest of white gowns, with sprays of holly caught here and there amongst ruffles and ribbons, and in her hair I fastened a spray of the glossy leaves and scarlet berries.

"There," I said, "you look like a veritable Christmas angel! And, Elizabeth dear, Christmas angels are filled with the Christmas spirit, which blots out all bitterness and resentment, and voices peace on earth;" and I hurried away without giving her time to answer. "Let her reflect," I thought.

The bazaar was lovely! Elizabeth was radiant, outwardly.

The professor was there. He was not even outwardly radiant, he was the picture of gloom and despair. I felt sorry for him, and sought an early opportunity to converse with him. "Wasn't this ideal Christmas weather?" He said it was, but I talked on, utterly disregarding his monosyllables. When Elizabeth happened to pass near us, I called to her, and then suddenly discovered that I was needed elsewhere, at once. Looking toward them a few moments later I discovered them engaged in eager conversation. "I hope they aren't going to quarrel in public," I thought, as I managed to draw nearer to them. In answer to Elizabeth's gesture I reached them just in time to hear the professor remark coldly, "If you do not credit me, I will ask you to let Olive answer," and he went in quest of that young person.

"He says," whispered Elizabeth, "that he did return my letters. I don't understand it at all."

Olive looked confused and uncomfortable when she arrived with the professor. "Here," said he, "is Olive, who will tell you that I entrusted her with a package for you, several days ago."

"Oh, Uncle Harry, I—I didn't like to take it, because I felt so sorry that you and Miss Allen were mad, so I gave it to Jennie Hardin, who goes in kindergarten, and she took it. I saw her lay it right on Miss Allen's desk."

Light dawned on Elizabeth's face.

"I know. I remember," she cried. "The children all brought packages that morning—I—oh," clasping her hands tragically, "it has gone in the barrel!"

The professor looked from one to another of our dismayed faces.

"The ash barrel?" he asked, with just a suspicion of a smile.

"Oh, no, no," said Olive, the *Poor Barrel*, you know." But he didn't know, so I interposed, "The letters you returned to Miss Allen have been donated to the poor."

"I am still mystified," said the professor. And just then Olive, who for a child of twelve, possessed a fine sense of humor, gave forth a peal of merry laughter. Elizabeth joined in, almost hysterically, and I followed. So the professor laughed too, following rather blindly, it must be confessed. Then I explained more fully, and Elizabeth began to look anxious.

"But my letters mustn't go away like that—we must get them!"

"How?" asked the professor. "Where have they gone?"

"Gone," said Olive, "oh, they haven't gone; the janitor took all the barrels down into the basement, and they are to go on the six

o'clock freight to-morrow morning."

The professor summed up the situation. "We must see the janitor."

"But it is ten o'clock."

"Still, we must see him." So he sent Olive off with a whispered petition, which Elizabeth seconded with an entreating smile.

"All right, I won't tell," laughed the child as she danced away. Then the professor asked Elizabeth and me to get our wraps and go with him. "I wouldn't ask it," he said, "but the janitor might question my authority; and the walk is not a long one."

Fortunately for us the janitor was good natured, and devoted to Elizabeth. He was very ready to do anything he could when he learned that by mistake Miss Allen had put a package into one of the barrels, which was intended for her personally. A Christmas gift, no doubt, so he was anxious to restore it to its owner.

The basement looked cold and ghostly in the flickering light of the lantern. The barrels were ranged along by the door, ready for their early journey. Each was filled with the offerings of the school children—clothes, toys, books, provisions—each barrel to be sent to some asylum, hospital or other distributing point, whence its contents would go

forth to bring Christmas cheer to the earth's less fortunate little ones. For a week every teacher in the building had superintended the packing of these donations, instilling into the hearts of her pupils the truth that to give is more blessed

than to receive. And into Elizabeth's barrel had been packed the letters which Jennie Hardin had silently placed upon the desk.

"Have you any idea which barrel your package is in, Miss Allen?" asked the janitor. Here was a fresh difficulty.

"We'll have to go through them all!" shivered Elizabeth, "and it is sure to be in the last one."

"Better open the last first, then," said the professor grimly.

Just then the lantern's fitful glimmer fell upon a barrel at the end of the line, and made visible a remarkable chalk reproduction of a rotund Santa Claus on an unstable sled, driving eight animals of uncertain species.

"There it is," cried Elizabeth, "there is Johnnie Green's picture—bless him!"

She told me afterward that she had re-

proved Johnnie for that particular bit of decoration.

The janitor and the professor opened the barrel, and Elizabeth laid out layer after layer of parcels.

"Here it is," she cried at last, and



"To her Elizabeth entrusted the package."

stood hugging it closely while the barrel was repacked and nailed up.

"Shall we go back to the bazaar?" I asked when we three walked away from the school house.

"No, oh, no," exclaimed Elizabeth, "I want to go home."

At the door we all hesitated—I felt myself to be distinctly a third person. "I am freezing," I said, "I must go in." And could I help hearing the professor say, "Elizabeth, let me have the letters again, I can take better care of them than you did, dear."

There was an ominous rustle and murmured sentences, and at last I heard Elizabeth say with a little tremulous laugh, "You'd better come in by the fire awhile; it was so cold in that basement."

And as I left them by the glowing fireplace, Elizabeth, with her holly, looking more than ever like a Christmas angel, and the professor like a soul redeemed to paradise, I called down to them over the banister, "Please remember me, you people, next time you have any choice literature to donate to the worthy poor."

Not a Streak of Yellow

BY HAROLD ACTON VIVIAN

"Yes, Nellie's a good girl. True blue and not a streak of yellow anywhere. I found that out afore I married her. I guess if I hadn't found out, the knot wouldn't never have been tied."

I knew the old fellow had had a rather unenviable record in his prime; consequently his reminiscences were always interesting. I pressed him to tell me how he found out that the little dark-haired woman who now presided over his household was "true blue with never a streak of yellow."

"Oh, it's a long story and belongs to them bygone days when I was not driving stage for a living. I had money then, lots of it. How I got it you can guess, or if you can't some of the old cats in the neighborhood'll tell you an' only too glad."

I told the old fellow that I thought I knew all there was to know about his past, whereat he smiled and continued his narrative.

"Well, I was plying my regular vocation, keeping close in the daytime, and prowling round o' nights in a dress suit. I was a pretty good-looking young fellow and no one noticed much when I happened to be on one street a little longer than a fellow might naturally be. There was a house on the outskirts of the town that took my fancy and I had been looking it over like for some time when one night, all of a sudden, I runs into a young girl standing watching me over a clump of bushes. I was a little startled, like even an old hand will be sometimes.

"'Nice night,' says I, when I got composed.

"'Yes,' she says, 'very nice.' Then after a little she adds, 'Was you looking for some one?'

"'Oh, no,' I says. 'Just taking a stroll.' And I lights a cigar.

"The bluff and the dress suit won out, as I had felt sure they would, and she comes nearer to me. Then I saw from her apron that she was a

servant and I commenced to chat in an offhand sort of way. She was a nice-appearing girl and we got along famously. After maybe half an hour, I says good-night and walks away, going leisurely back to the town.

"Next night I meet her again and we get very chummy. She takes kindly to the attentions of a man in a dress suit, and between times I learn a whole lot about the house and who lives there.

"Well, we keep on meeting every night and pretty soon we are sweet-hearts and pass our time both on one side of the clump of bushes. She was fair gone and I, well, I liked her first rate, but I was out for business and by this time had a very complete plan of the inside of the house stored away in my noddle. Also I knew the habits of all the folks, how many servants and all about them, and that there wasn't no dog.

"One night she tips me off quite accidental, that there's a big blowout down the road a piece the next night and that all the folks are going. I drops that it's the cook's night off and that the butler will surely be drunk and lays my plans accordingly. No one but the maid to guard the jewels and plate, and it's easy money for Jim and his gum-shoes.

"'I'm going away in the morning,' says I, just about time to say good-night.

"She holds still a minute and then she says:

"'Don't leave me, George. Can't I go 'long?'

"I had told her my name was George, and now she was doing a little weeping and making me feel like the old scratch. I takes her in my arms and says 'I'll come back,' but she is all out, and I go home

feeling like the mean skunk I am and cussing myself until long after the lights are out.

"But business is business and the next night I'm ready for the job. 'Long about ten, dress suit and all, with the pockets loaded with tools, I strolls away 'round outside the town on the wrong side, and makes my way back to the rear of the house. There was a little piece of wooded land there where I had a ladder hidden. Waiting a while, and watching the house until all the lights go out, I shoves the ladder under the hedge and raises it against the hall window on the second floor, which I knows has no catch. Three minutes after, I was in the dark hallway; my rope was fixed for a quick jump out and the ladder was flat on the ground where it couldn't be seen.

"I never worked at a job that started out so easy. Everything worked to a charm. Not a sound in the house and all the bed-room doors open. I knew there wasn't a soul within two flights of me and just worked away at my pleasure.

"When I got through with that floor, I had my pockets—the big swag pockets—plumb full of all sorts of trinkets; with diamonds and other jewelry enough to stock a store. Then I started down for the dining-room where the plate was kept.

"There was mighty little light in the dining-room and I had to wear my gum-shoes, while I picked the lock of the sideboard, for fear of waking the maid, who, I knew, was the only sober person in the house and slept right underneath. I had the lock just finished and was about to open the little door, when I heard a sound. I guess I shook, for I was the whole length of the room from the door and the sound seemed to come from the window. Quiet as I

could I ducked behind the end of the sideboard, in the shadow. Pretty soon I heard the sound again and peeked around the corner and then I saw what caused it.

"I'm hanged if some blooming burglar wasn't trying to get in, and at the dining-room window at that. I sized him up for a greeny right away, but I was in a pretty pickle myself, nevertheless. I hated to leave the swag, but I had just about decided to do it when the window opens and in hops the other fellow.

"I don't know what made me do it, but I just reached down and pulled off the gum-shoes, and then I got out my gun. Mr. Burglar waits a minute to listen and then starts across for the sideboard. I slid along the wall to where I knew I would find the electric button and the first thing you know the room is full of light and I have Mr. Burglar covered with my gun.

"'Hands up!' says I, cool as a cucumber. 'Up with them.'

"I heard a scream from downstairs and a yell from outside just as I spoke. Mr. Burglar, he just drops the clumsy jimmy he'd used to open the window, shoots up his hands, opens his mouth and stares.

"'Now stand still,' says I, 'or I'll shoot.'

"Almost as I spoke a big hulking figure climbs in the window and a fat man with a double chin says:

"'So you've got him, have you? Good business.'

"'Who are you?' says I.

"'I'm a New York detective, and I followed this fellow down here,' says the fat man. 'Seen him prowling around an hour ago and surmised there was something doing.'

"'Well, I nearly dropped dead. It was plain to me that the detective took me for the boss on account of the dress suit. I was in the game

for fair then, but I heard some one coming up the stairs and I thought my finish was near.

"'Nellie—yes the maid was Nellie right enough—she gets to the door and then she screams.

"'It's all right, gal,' says the detective. 'Mr. Archer here has caught a burglar, that's all.'

"She looks at him a minute and then she looks at me. I winked on the off chance without a ghost of a hope that she'd help me out.

"After a minute she says: 'Land's sakes, Mr. Archer, but I'm glad.' Then she looks at me with them big blue eyes of hers all agleam with tears, and I felt like a plugged dime. The detective was looking her way, too, for she was a mighty pretty girl and looked fine with her hair down.

"Mr. Burglar he sees his chance just then and makes a run and a jump out the window. Quick as a wink, he is over the sill and out of sight.

"'After him quick,' I shouts to the detective. 'He's been upstairs and got all the jewelry.'

"The fat man hurries over and climbs out. Across the lawn the two dash, out the gate, and off down the road. I ain't seen neither of them since.

"I stood there like a fool looking at Nellie. She looks up at me a minute, then she says: 'So you are a burglar?'

"My pockets was a-bulging out with some one else's jewelry, so I says 'yes' and hangs my head.

"'George,' she says, 'will you quit it for me?'

"I did a lot of tall thinking in a few seconds and then I says: 'Yes I will, Nellie, if you'll come along right now.'

"'Never do it again?'

"'Never.'

"She comes over to me and she

puts her arms on my shoulders and she looks up into my face. I looked right down at her too, though I did feel like a dog.

"'George,' she says, 'I love you, but you've got to be honest if you want me. Are you sure you want me?'

"She looked so little an' pretty an' helpless, standing there that I just took her in my arms and kissed her. Then she threw her arm around me and cried a little, but pretty soon she says: 'We'd better be gone when the folks get back.'

"As she spoke her arms slipped down and she noticed my bulging pockets. 'What have you got there, George?' she says.

"She was greatly shocked when she found out, and made me take out all the jewelry. 'We'll pile it up here in the center of the floor and leave it,' she says.

"After we had done as she said she goes and gets ready to leave, and comes back mighty quick—for a woman. But our troubles weren't over, for just as we got to the door, in walks Mr. and Mrs. Archer. When they seen me, and Nellie

with her things on, they *was* surprised. Nellie she caught her breath and then she says, calm like:

"'If you please, ma'am, this is me young man and he just come to tell me he had to leave sudden for the West, when a burglar was found in the dinin' room. He helped the detective to catch him, and if there ain't no objection, ma'am, I'd like to go with him now and get married seein' as how he's going away.'

"Well, you never see such a commotion in your life. It took them half an hour to get cooled down and then they agreed to let Nellie go. All the time I was a-worrying for fear the detective would come back.

"We caught the late train for New York where we got spliced. On the way down the little woman turns to me and says: 'George, I pulled you out of a hole that time. Now you've got to stay out. I'll help you just as long as you try.'

"That's all there was to it. She helped me, God bless her, and I've stayed out of the hole ever since. But say, did you ever hear of such nerve? Nellie's true blue, she is; not a streak of yellow anywhere."





REVEREND PERICLES PETERS, PIRATE

BY REX E. BEACH



"How did I get here? I swam. That was the start anyhow. I swam some and buccaneered the balance. 'Twas Seattle I cleared from late one night, bound North, by means of the breast stroke, with my shoes in my teeth. A cold start? The finish was warm enough."

Bill's narrative broke only when his teeth engaged the loose ends of the snow-shoe web, and as he mended I lay in the bunk watching his rhythmic threading movements. Outside the cabin the snow flurries murmured now and then, while within, the Yukon stove roared bravely.

"I remember how I shivered when I hit the water, black and mysterious in the dark, but my ripples never even woke up the watchman as I swam out from under the wharf.

"I struck into the night till I came to the shadow of the big barge. When I'd located the night watch, up I went onto the deck. The smell of live stock came from the house amidships, and I left a trail of salt water when I moved in among the stalls.

"Puget Sound night air won't run you crazy with heat, and my teeth sounded like a Spanish dance when I wrung out my clothes. 'Still, might be worse,' thinks I, 'I'll turn in with some of the stock and warm up till daylight. Hope I don't draw a steer disposed toward ejections.'

"I found a stall with plenty of bedding, and stumbled over a smallish beast that grunted lazy-like. 'Just my luck, copped out a yearling

'stead of a four-year-old base-burner that would radiate good.' However, being cold, I burrowed into the straw and coaxed some of her body-heat into my soggy garments."

Bill paused to run a grass through his pipe stem. I remained discreetly silent, for my partner discourses with the love of the true raconteur, solely from rapture of the telling, and in the fervor of the fabulist, scorns interruption.

"'There'll be doings in the morning,' thinks I, 'but we'll be out to sea by daylight. A stowaway's life ain't a merry one anyhow.'

"I had a terrible dream. A fat devil sat on my bosom, and filed down my features with a wood-rasp. When I woke up, the yell petered right out of me, and I went dry. I gazed plumb into the thorax of the biggest bear west of the Cascades. His fore-paws were on my chest, while he licked my face with a tongue like the roll to a music box. At every swipe the skin vanished with a sound like tearing sandpaper.

"About the third kiss I wriggled out from under the mistletoe, and dove into the end of the stall. Then something else grabbed me from on top. I lost my voice good and proper this time, for it roped me about the neck, shutting off my wind, and withdrawing hair in bouquets. Our buck-jumps defaced that stall considerable, and my eyes bugged out till I saw over my own shoulders. A big monkey had moved into my top flat.

"The bear watched, pleased and

expectant, saving up for the finals, while me and the monk did ground and lofty tumbling till I heard a voice, 'Hannibal! Stop that! Cleopatra! Attention!'

"The monkey whipped up a post, the bear rose and gravely saluted with a mitt the size of a pack-saddle, while I wobbled out, my legs acting like they each chose different routes

"Thank ye! Saved my life that clatter,' I gasps. 'Shake!'

"Saved nothing,' the stranger answers, 'they're tame. That bear wouldn't hurt a baby. She's just looking for affection. Hannibal, he's jealous. I call her Cleopatra, because she's so wanton in her attentions. Hannibal was another dago, always looking for trouble and getting it—hence the monkey. What! Ain't going to faint? Here, I'll get some water.'

"Water be cussed,' says I, 'whiskey! I'm a full grown man from Texas.'

"Who are you?' he inquires, after I had sort of combined myself.

"Billy Joyce,' I replies, 'Profesh, cow-puncher, alternating with moments of prospecting, otherwise sane and gentle; destination, Klondyke; resources, a bright and vivacious manner; hence, present occupation, stowaway.'

"Allow me,' says he, 'Reverend Doctor Pericles Peters, physician and surgeon.'

"Physician and surgeon?' says I, 'I'm honored.'

"Yes, V. C.'

"You don't say! Victoria Cross?'

"No! Vet'rinary and corn.'

"I bowed, 'How about the "Reverend"?"

"Nothing to it; just use it for ballast. My graft is animal training and ventriloquism, in connection with the practice of medicine.'

"Coming out on deck I found we

were getting close to the Straits, our lighter boiling along in the wake of a black-hulled ocean steamer; towed at the end of a big sagging hawser. On either hand moved the smoky shores of Puget Sound. I sized up my versatile friend. He was thick and reddish, with large features and figures of speech. Sort of violent-looking in places, but tame around the eyes.

"Great lay-out, ain't it?' says he, indicating the deck hidden under lumber and freight. 'Come on, I'll show you where I hang out.'

"On the forrad end of the barge was a little river steamer; one of these flat-paddle-wheel do-funnys doomed to run down rivers and be towed up.

"She's the "Aurora Borealis,"' he explained; 'belongs to a mining company. They've loaded her on here, all stocked and ready to drop overboard when they hit the Yukon. I'm sleeping inside, so as to be near my animals. Come in.'

"He rummaged around under a bunk, and found what was necessary, so we got acquainted. It was Scotch, as I recall it.

"I ain't located the cigars yet,' says he, 'this being my first day.'

"That was a nice little boat and fixed up good; coal in the hold, grub in the pantry and a galley full of dishes. Peters was a most absorbing man, too, full of retrospections, and having explored places where Stanley would have been stolen by the natives. He had a patent on some medicine for the eradication of tapeworms, and worked his horses and toes on the side to bring custom. A reg'lar all-around sport and chiropodist.

"He was importing some goods for speculation, too: 500 bottles of 'Pericles' Peerless Extirpator,' his tape cure, I spoke about, also 1,000

watch-springs. The first was a boon to humanity, which from altruistic motives he distributed at the nominal rate of one dollar a bottle. 'A necessary tapeworm,' says he, 'can be endured by a feller in the States, where there's plenty to eat, but it would break a man to board one in a country where grub's worth a dollar a pound. It's time for science to take a hand, and henceforth there ain't any excuse for a miner to keep one unless he wants it for company. As to the watch-springs,' says he, letting me in very knowing, 'cold weather—hard on watches. No jewelers in Alaska—big money.'

"The weather was fine for a week, and we plugged out towards the big turn for the northward. Then it stormed.

"That *was* a storm, too. I've seen a camp-kettle blown over a mountain down on the Peninsula, but that was like artificial ventilation to this, just a forced draft. The steamer plunged into it for two days, now climbing like a mountain sheep, her decks showing steep as a hillside; now diving like a prairie-dog, kicking her heels into the sky; the wheel racing like a buzz-saw and her bottom showing blood red. The cable eased and drooped, then sung like a fiddle-string, cracking our timbers and twitching the equilibrium out from under us.

"On the second night I found a demijohn in the forrad hold, and the howling of the storm dwindled into the sweet sighing of pine trees. Doc and I bought the United Verde and the Comstock Lode, tamed lions and cured corns the size of flap-jacks, till everything faded away.

"I was awakened by that same weight on my chest, and my face peeling off under the advances of Cleopatra. I scrambled out with a bad head, wondering at the presence

of Hannibal and the bear. Then I felt queer motions. The boat slid in all directions, short and violent, and the steady surge of the lighter was gone. I heard the swish of water outside the banging cabin door, and when I staggered to a window I looked out through a whirling rain onto empty miles of bilious heaving waves.

"'We're adrift, Doc! We're adrift!'

"I shook him up and he stared around trancey and bewildered. Nothing showed but our hat box teetering on the top of the rollers. Then he spied the animals.

"'How did they get here?'

"The barge must have gone to pieces in the night and in the panic they broke away and came to you.'

"All day we drifted, while the rain beat the waves out flat, and by night we rode to'able easy.

"'Can you run an engine?' says Peters. 'Although possessed of an intimate knowledge of the animal organism, I never operated a mechanism more complicated than a wheel-barrow. I couldn't diagnose the vitals of a wringer, to save my life.'

"'Sure,' says I, 'I'm a natural machinist. At the age of twelve I dissected a coffee-mill and 'most got it together alone.' So I crawled into the engine-room and built a fire. When I turned the gas into her she moved off fine, the big paddle-wheel spat, spat, spitting astern, and the cough of the smokestack sounding blamed encouraging.

"'I'll assume command,' says Pericles, taking the wheel, 'and salute myself.' He pulled the whistle cord.

"Her owners must have had a sense of humor, for they'd saddled the pore little child with an adult three-hundred-horse-power siren.



“ ‘I’ll assume command,’ says Pericles, taking the wheel.”

One of these fire-whistles grown in lumber-yards, with a shriek of torture and the volume of a runaway gas well. It vocalized a scale of harrowing tones that ran the animals crazy, and the steam gauge down to zero.

"All night we steered by what Doc called 'Alfalfa in Ursy Miner.' He was dead wrong, though. It was the North Star he aimed at. Next day we raised land. But such land! It stuck out of the ocean quick and high, and snow was on the mountains. Bye and bye we found a bay and ran up onto the beach and got off to stretch. We made her fast and turned into the top bunks, where Cleopatra couldn't demonstrate her predilections.

" 'Where do you reckon we are?' says Peters, next morning.

" 'Dunno,' says I, 'may be Alaska; may be Sibeery.'

" 'See here,' says he, 'I've been thinking of a scheme. Here we are, unknown adventuresses on a hostile shore; we've got a good ship and a faithful crew.' He indicated Cleopatra, who was licking the syrup keg, while Hannibal exploited her back hair like an entomologist. 'This land is at our mercy.'

" 'What d'ye mean?'

"He leaned over the table and whispered intense and eager.

" 'Let's turn pirates! We'll h'ist the black flag and ravage the coast.'

" 'Ha! ha! You're plumb bug,' says I. 'Turn pirate! Turn *over*. You're on your back; this here talk'll wake you up. What is there to ravage? Coast line and sea-weed. Furthermore it ain't reg'lar. We ain't built long and low and rakish. Thunder, who ever heard of stern-wheeled pirates?'

" 'There's Indians,' he continues, 'and they've got furs and ivory and trinkets.'

" 'Yes, and ten men to our one. We'd finish so fast we'd bust up our start,' says I, 'though anything like that appeals to me.'

" 'You're dead wrong. This crew can win bloodless battles. Watch this!' He climbed out on deck—'Attention!' Both animals riz up and saluted. He handed each one a capstan bar, and then put them through a reg'lar silent drill, topping off with a parade around the deck, Cleopatra dignified and rapturous, Hannibal quarrelsome and ornery.

" 'One of my professional stunts,' says he. 'We'll run up to the beach and blow the whistle, that'll raise the bristles on the native population. Then lay low and send out the crew armed and spurred. If the sight of a cake-walking grizzly don't stam-pede the resident voters, Hannibal will. They've never seen an ape. What d'ye think?'

"Hannibal certainly did look like the devil, which was necessary, with his sunken eyes, white brows, and half-witted contortions.

" 'It's a cinch,' says I.

"We fitted Cleopatra out with a sail cloth jacket, and made some white duck pants for her blushing limbs. She looked real sporty, and yacht-like till she sat in some grease by the engine. Doc rigged up pirate pants for Hannibal out of a red table cloth, and tied a bread-knife on his belt. They made a most solemn and laughable pair, as we rehearsed all the next day.

"About twenty miles up the coast we rounded a point onto a group of 'igloos.' When we spattered up to the beach every live thing swarmed to the water; old and young, male and female, dogs and children. A dirtier set of humans I never saw or smelled—'twas an off-shore breeze. They gaped at us, distended with amazements and modest confusions.

"Doc ran the nose of the Borealis onto the shingle, while we kept hid; then as they gathered, he swung onto the rope.

"The boat vomited tones, rising and rising, a hair at a time, louder and awfuller, till the hills rattled and

did the 'Palmer House' out onto the front deck, resplendent in a white outing suit, her baggy little trousers looking terrible shiftless and dirty from behind. She stood up and went over the side onto the beach, with a slush-bucket in her fore paws.



"Nineteen-year-old hostages is complicating." See page 226

the moss flew off in chunks; a shrieking pandemonium that gradually died away into a long sob.

"Squaws grabbed their children and scurried into the brush while the men dried up into a bunch and looked troubled. Then Cleopatra

That loosened the men, and they shook the sand out of their 'muk-luks,' pawing up the bank to the women, frightened and panicky. They turned in time to see Hannibal leap into the arena, stripped and hairy, his bread knife gleaming, and

his face working. One look and we owned the town. When the last decrepit squaw had scrambled over the sky line, we laid on the deck and wept.

"It was a good fur season, and we found some prime skins, red and white fox, beaver, and two silver grays. We took about thirty walrus tusks besides, and some baskets. Then with a dozen fresh salmon for Cleopatra we pulled out.

"When it came down to actual robbery, my morals wouldn't stand for it.

"It is tough to hand 'em the bunk this way,' agreed Doc; 'let's make an even exchange, so they can't kick.' We did. We left twenty bottles of 'Pericles' Peerless Extirpator,' and a cigar box full of watch springs.

"For two hundred miles we harried that coast without spilling a drop of blood, and the patent medicine and main springs were going fast.

"I'm afraid we've been paying too liberal,' says Doc. 'If we run out of goods we'll be up against the moral side of this affair, and I'd like to keep my conscience clean.'

"At last we came to quite a village. We found nothing but women and children, as the men were up in the hills hunting. The squaws melted screaming up the creek when we blew the whistle.

"There was one real house built of logs, sort of a store. 'It's a trading post,' says Doc. 'Ain't that swell? Look at those furs overhead.' He scrambled up a ladder and then I heard:

"What in—— Say, Bill! here's a girl.'

"He hauled her down into the light, and she was mighty easy to look at; red and plump as a ripe salmon-berry, and 'most scared to death.

"Ain't she a peach?'

"Awful white for an Indian,' says I.

"I ain't Injun,' she says, with commingled embarrassments and modesties. 'My ole' man trader, Russian.'

"All right,' says we, 'you'll pardon us while we rob your pa. We're pirates.'

"Doc is a fine painstaker; most thorough; and never overlooks any bets; so when everything was aboard he appears with the girl yelling and kicking in his arms.

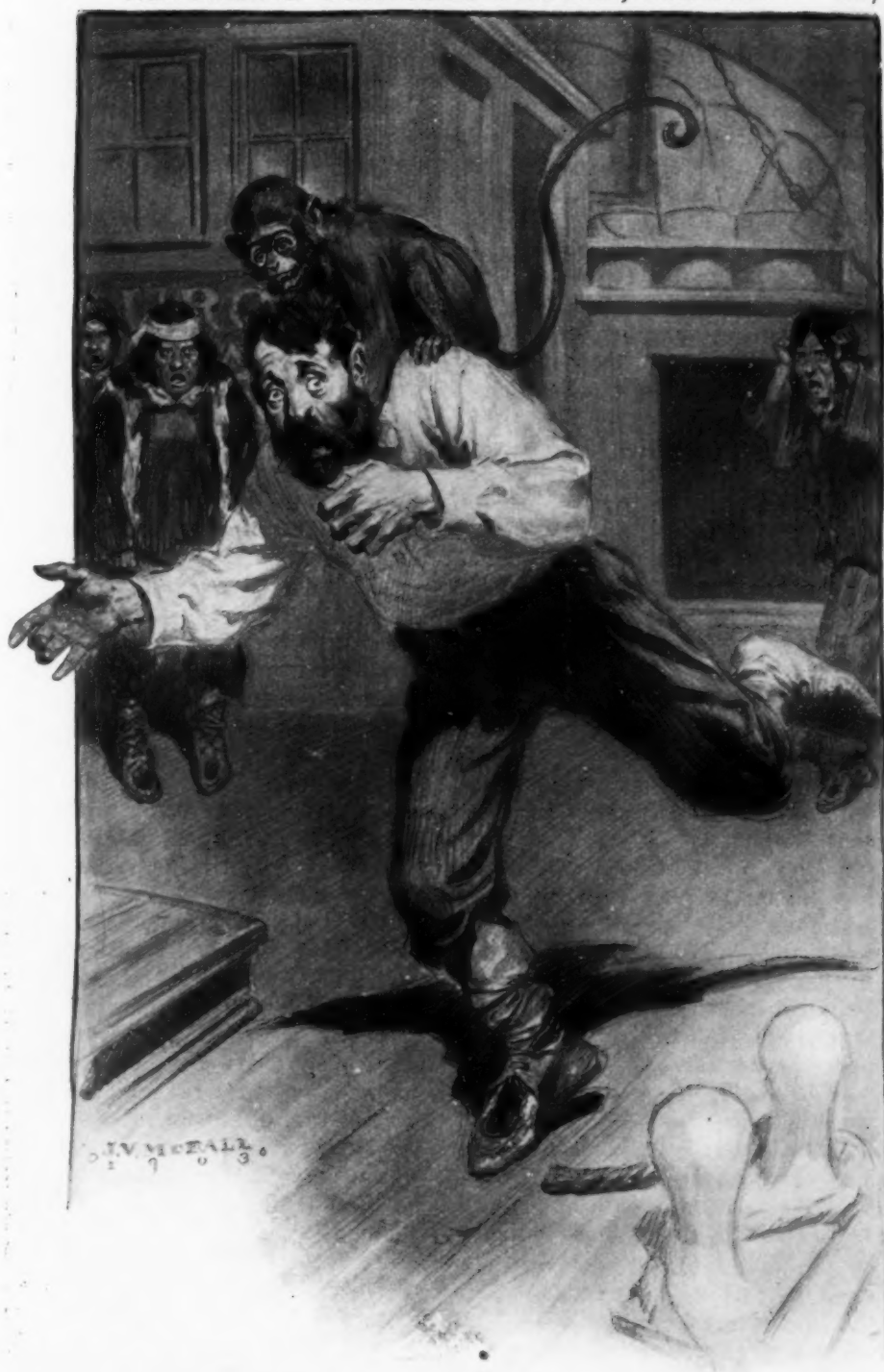
"What's up?'

"Nothing,' says he, 'only if we're going to be pirates, let's be reg'lar good ones. She's a hostage!'

"When she saw Hannibal she acted up so bad we shut him in a cabin locker, where he raised a terrible row.

"Nineteen-year-old hostages, handsome, is complicating, and I could see that she had Doc going; he was ready to quit buccaneering and hunt a missionary. She was a Jonah, too, for we hadn't gone ten miles when the feed pump broke and we anchored. It was dark when I got it fixed, and we turned to for supper. Hostage didn't relish her grub somehow, though we opened every can we could find.

"We were still at it when something struck us amidships, and a swarm of feet pattered on the deck. The girl screamed, and we dove out the door into the arms of the male population. A little fat half-breed directed the obsequies, evidently the trader, for he clamped onto the girl, while we two holystoned the deck under a cord of Eskimos. Peters is a hairy man, sprightly of movement under excitements, while I am passable in a rough-house, and we kept the tribe engaged for some time. We boiled around fine and



"He gurgled and struck at the thing clinging to his shoulders."

See page 228.

exhilarating till I got a clout with a stick, and tamed down, trying to stay awake. Doc was entombed under a pyramid of niggery-looking barbarians till he couldn't bat an eye.

"In the midst of it Cleopatra shuffled out, with yearnings and expectancy in her face, looking for affection. The roar of the fat man's musket nearly busted my ears, and she rose up biting at her breast, with a pore pitiful groan, then laid down and died like a Christian. Peter's mountain of black men got eruptive, and pieces of beautiful English came out, but they kicked and squashed till the swear words went out of him with a wheeze.

"We were wound up like tops, and set against the cabin, while the trader threw Russian at us like broken crockery. He was in an ecstasy of indecision which route to book us, fire, sword or water.

" 'Piracy ain't so much of a sport, after all,' says Pericles.

" 'It won't ever get real popular with the masses,' says I. 'Can't these Indians take a joke?'

"They unloaded our cargo into big 'Oomiaks' alongside, and now and then Fatty spit at us. Oh, he was a stubborn one, most nurseful of his indignities! When it was all overboard he coughed some busted langwidge at them, and they lashed us to the anchor.

" 'Look here,' yells Doc, 'you wouldn't drown us! That's murder!'

"The trader punted at his short ribs, grinning most terrible.

" 'We're caught with the goods, Doc,' says I, 'and he's going to

moor us to this thing all right. We'll be bell-buoys for the codfish. Can't you think of some excuse?' I could feel the jelly-fish and sea-urchins nesting on my person already.

"Peters began some ventriloquisms. He threw his voice inside the cabin, and they chased it, then out again, switching all around them, keen on the scent.

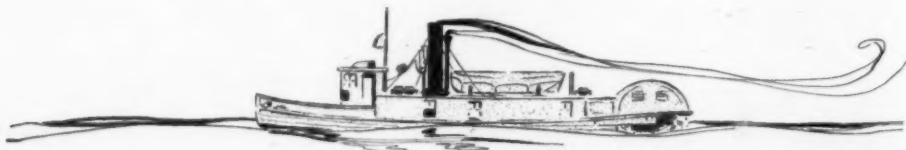
" 'It's no go,' says he, as we heard the fat man slamming the cabin lockers, 'He's stuck to find it.' Then the air split with a Russian yell, and the crashing of dishes. It sounded like a Saturday night survival of the fittest at Billy the Mug's, and the little fat man busted out into the torch light, ashy and glaring. He gurgled and struck at the thing clinging to his shoulders. Hannibal had a lover's knot on his apple, and I saw hair floating off in puffs while he snapped his shiny teeth, biting and screaming.

"Men went over the side in a wave. Some few hit the boats, and there was much splashing. The half-breed hurdled the railing, and as he flopped among the furs the rest trampled each other in avoiding him. Hannibal was back on the bulwarks, raging up and down, his hair on end, and full of ginger.

" 'Ain't he a four-time winner?' yells Peters, as the canoes went foaming out into the night. 'He's got the true pirate spirit.'

" 'Yes, but he'll work alone, for all of me,' says I, 'I'm through.'

" 'Well! I guess I am, too,' says Peters."



PERSONAL PAGES BY THE PUBLISHERS

The Magazine With More Than One-eighth of a Million at the End of Eight Months.

THE RED BOOK believes it has done what has never been done before in the making of a magazine—with but eight months of history, it finds its circulation demands to be more than one-eighth of a million copies monthly. There are diverse ways of figuring circulation. The foregoing statement does not involve an estimate of five readers to the magazine, or three members to the family, or a counting of both covers, or any other devious process of making large figures out of small facts, but means literally what it says.

There are two ways to get circulation—one to make a publication so good and so enticing that it sells itself, and the other to advertise it so extravagantly that people buy it out of curiosity. THE RED BOOK publishers have preferred the former method, permitting the magazine to speak for itself, and therefore the circulation has increased entirely because of the attractiveness of the publication and the quality of the material offered in it. This is why the circulation has grown steadily 10,000, 15,000 and 20,000 each month; this is why all previous buyers get THE RED BOOK every month, and other thousands add themselves to the list; this is why the magazine in eight months is a recognized factor in the magazine world.

The people who buy THE RED BOOK are discriminating readers who

like good stories and good pictures in attractive form, the people who read advertisements and are able to buy the things advertised. That is why THE RED BOOK advertising has grown in like ratio with its circulation, and why advertisers have profited by this medium. RED BOOK readers are RED BOOK friends, and they can afford to buy the things offered them.

The first thing you see of THE RED BOOK is its cover. That's the show-window. The cover is a most important factor in fixing the attention of readers upon a magazine, when it is one of a multitude, offered at every hand. That is why we take so much pains to obtain covers that are artistic, beautiful and bright. They are going to be better all the time, and we don't mind saying that we are proud of THE RED BOOK cover series.

It would not be worth while to provide beautiful covers—the show-window—if the goods inside, ready to deliver, did not justify the outward display. That is why we take even more pains with the inside of the magazine than we do with the cover—supplements, portraits of beautiful women, cleverest of clever stories by the best writers, illustrated by artists who know what illustration means; all printed in the highest style of the typographer's art—are what THE RED BOOK means to offer its readers in ample measure of quantity and quality, with standards of excellence constantly advancing.

The Magazine That's Made a Record

PERSONAL PAGES BY THE PUBLISHERS

As a special feature appropriate to the season, every purchaser of THE RED BOOK this month obtains a supplement of unusual artistic beauty and charm, without which no copy of the magazine is complete. "THE DYING YEAR" is the name of this artistic treasure. It has been posed and produced especially for THE RED BOOK by Stein of Milwaukee, an artist of international fame, and the reproduction by duo-tone process makes the picture worthy of preservation as a genuine treasure by any lover of the beautiful. The art study interprets itself, and is so simple and yet so strong in the thought, composition and execution, that no one can fail to be impressed by, or to interpret instantly the significance of the picture.

In addition to this noteworthy supplement feature, this holiday number of THE RED BOOK doubles the number of art studies heretofore offered, and prints sixteen portraits of beautiful women as a gallery which cannot fail to attract every reader. Eight of these portraits form a noteworthy group of the most distinguished leaders of diplomatic, official and social circles in Washington, D. C., a circle that is widely recognized as one of the most intellectual and attractive to be found among all the capitals of the world.

Following the portraits of our Washington belles, the December RED BOOK offers eight studies of charming women from the most famous studios of Paris, typical of the beauty of the French capital.

THE RED BOOK is a story magazine, in spite of the features heretofore mentioned, in which the publishers take proper pride. It is, after all, the stories themselves that invite closest attention; clever stories, cheerful stories, original stories, interesting stories, they are all intended to be, and they are drawn from whatever source provides such stories. Many distinguished writers have contributed to the magazine during the first eight months of its life, and many young writers who may date the beginning of their fame from their introduction to the public through these pages.

THE RED BOOK wants to make friends out of its subscribers, who now number more than one-eighth of a million, and the publishers are always glad to hear from these readers with comment or criticism, be it favorable or unfavorable, in order that a more intelligent effort may be made to meet the reasonable demands of an intelligent public that is sure to appreciate and repay efforts made in its behalf.

The Magazine That's Made a Record